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THE STORY OF MARIE-ANTOINETTE

MARIE-ANTOINETTE.

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THE STORY OF MARIE-ANTOINETTE

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BY

ANNA L. BICKNELL

AUTHOR OF "LIFE IN THE TUILERIES UNDER THE SECOND EMPIRE"

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

PAGE

Character of Maria Theresa — Her political views — Birth of Marie-Antoinette — A bad omen — Marriages of the daughters of Maria Theresa — The destiny of Marie-Antoinette — Her education — Affianced at fourteen to the heir of the crown of France — Her mother's parting advice — An accredited spy — Her mother's aim — Picture of the Court of France — The King — Madame du Barry — The Dauphin — The daughters of the King — Adverse elements 1

CHAPTER II

The Archduchess arrives at the Pavilion of Exchange in an island on the Rhine — The etiquette observed — Arrival at Compiègne, where she meets the King and the Dauphin — Arrival at Versailles — The marriage ceremony — The apartments of the Dauphine — The beauty of the young bride — The Abbé de Vermond — Hostility of the Duc de la Vauguyon — Madame de Noailles — Worries over etiquette — Daily life described in a letter to Maria Theresa — How pictures were painted by a queen — The neglected education of Marie-Antoinette — Incessant spying on her actions — A duke listening at doors — Madame du Barry — Intrigues to influence the Dauphin 13

CHAPTER III

Objections to the Dauphine's wish to ride on horseback — Donkeys allowed, as "these animals are not at all danger-

PAGE

ous" — What is to be done when a Dauphine of France falls from a donkey? — The Dauphine yields to the temptation of riding a horse — A solemn ambassador — Threats of anger on the part of Maria Theresa — The Dauphine greatly frightened — Amiable nature of Marie-Antoinette — A Dauphine of France loses her shoe in the mud — Picture of the court of Louis XV — The Dauphine's position — Difficulties and court cabals — Disgrace of Choiseul — The Dauphine proudly refuses to propitiate Madame du Barry — The Dauphin and his brother fight in the presence of Marie-Antoinette — Marriages of the Comte de Provence and the Comte d'Artois — Letters of Maria Theresa — Illness of the King — Particulars of his death — What etiquette required of a gentleman in waiting 32

CHAPTER IV

The young King and Queen — Marie-Antoinette receives in state the great ladies of the land — Difficulties in obtaining due respect from the King's brothers and their wives — Too much kindness and indulgence — The Queen prepares private apartments as a refuge from too much splendor — Her daily life — The beauty and grace of the Queen — Etiquette and customs — Trianon and its improvements — The Queen's dairy — The Queen's extravagant fashions — Tastes of the King — His love of hunting — Dangerous influence of the Comte d'Artois — Public criticism 62

CHAPTER V

The King's coronation — A painful crown — A royal brother — Blunders of an archduke — An imprudent correspondence — The Queen's likes and dislikes — Intimacy with the Princesse de Lamballe — The King's sledges — Danger in diamond bracelets — Reprimands and prophecies of Maria Theresa — Marriage of Madame Clotilde — The Queen described by Horace Walpole — Intimacy with the Princesse de Guéménée 85

CHAPTER VI

PAGE

Rivalries and court jealousies — Evenings in the apartments of the Princesse de Guéménée — A chilling visitor — Noisy, undignified society — Privileges of the milliner Mlle. Bertin — The Queen's extravagance — Her frivolity — An adoption — Journey to France of Joseph II — The Queen's simplicity and ingenuousness — Impressions made by Joseph II on the King and Queen — A head-dress "too fragile to support a crown" — Impressions made on Joseph II by his visit — Return of her "evil genius" — Reports in the English newspapers — The Queen and Hume's "History of England." 102

CHAPTER VII

Fontainebleau in 1777 — The Queen's day at Fontainebleau — Constant association with the Comtesse de Polignac — Extravagance of Comte d'Artois — Hopes of an heir to the crown — Political difficulties — Interference of Marie-Antoinette in favor of Austria — Pressing letters from Maria Theresa — The Queen is more than ever called "the Austrian" — Madame Elisabeth's household — Household of the future heir — Birth of a daughter — Chimney-sweepers at the birth of a royal child — Witchcraft and a wedding-ring — Madame de Genlis 124

CHAPTER VIII

The Queen coldly received at the thanksgiving service — Fresh resolutions — The Opéra masked balls — A Queen in a hackney-coach — False reports — The Queen has the measles — Unexpected sick-nurses — The Queen goes to Trianon for her convalescence — Abolition of etiquette at Trianon — Unfounded rumors concerning the Queen — An old coxcomb — Story of a heron plume — Causes of bitter enmity against the Queen — Perilous friendship — The theater of Trianon — A majestic soubrette — Madame de Lamballe — Death of Maria Theresa — Grief of the Queen. 138

CHAPTER IX

PAGE

Birth of the Dauphin — Joy of the King and Queen — Bankruptcy of the Prince de Guéménée — Its consequences — Duchesse de Polignac appointed State Governess of the "Children of France" — Visit of the King of Sweden — An unexpected guest at a royal dinner-table — Visit of the Grand Duke Paul of Russia and his consort — Etiquette concerning a bracelet — Death of the prime minister Maurepas — Appointment of Calonne and its consequences — Combined economy and extravagance of Louis XVI — Purchase of Rambouillet and St. Cloud — Montreuil and Madame Elisabeth — "Pauvre Jacques" — Unpopularity of the Queen 152

CHAPTER X

A wonderful necklace — Generosity of Louis XVI refused by Marie-Antoinette — An unworthy prelate — An adventuress connected with the reigning family of France — A cardinal duped — A moonlight scene in the park of Versailles — Gift of a rose — An extraordinary resemblance — Forged letters of the Queen — A prelate arrested in his pontifical robes — A trial concerning the highest nobility of France — Indignation of the Queen at the verdict — What was the truth? 162

CHAPTER XI

The last theatrical performance at Trianon — The Queen now entirely devoted to her children — She perseveres unfortunately in her Austrian policy — Her amiable disposition — The old keeper at Trianon — Madame Vigée Lebrun, the artist — The beauty of the Queen — Anecdotes — Affectionate intercourse with Madame Elisabeth — Death of the little Princesse Sophie — Strange prophecy of Cazotte — Painting by Madame Lebrun — Alarming condition of the Dauphin — Political difficulties and complications 184

CHAPTER XII

PAGE

Convocation of the States-General — Royal pomp shown for the last time — The Queen subjected to insulting cries — Death of the Dauphin — Superstition and wax candles — The Bastille taken — Murder of the governor, de Launay, and of the provost Flesselles — Scenes of "Sentiment" — Flight of the Polignac family — Departure of several princes of the royal blood — Delusion of Lafayette — Banquet of the Guards at Versailles 198

CHAPTER XIII

Insurrection in Paris — The populace force Lafayette to lead them to Versailles — Advice of the Minister of the Interior, Comte de Saint-Priest — Mistaken refusal of the Queen to leave the King — His indecision — Mistaken views of Necker and Lafayette — Attack on the Queen's apartments — Devoted bravery of the Guards — The Queen forced to seek refuge in the King's apartments — Her intrepidity — The Royal Family taken forcibly to Paris — Arrival at the Tuileries — The little Dauphin — The Princesse de Lamballe — Daily life of Marie-Antoinette 206

CHAPTER XIV

Attempt of the royalists to carry off the King by force — The King will not consent — The two guards, Miomandre de Ste.-Marie and his companion, received and thanked by the Queen — Unfortunate shyness of the King — St. Cloud — Fears of poison for the Queen — Interview with Mirabeau — Plans for flight — Procrastination — Return of Fersen — What the Queen thought absolutely necessary for precipitate flight — Rumors in the public world..... 221

CHAPTER XV

Flight of the royal family — They are recognized on the road, and stopped at Varennes — Scenes in the house of the

PAGE

mayor — Return to Paris — Barnave and Péthion — Madame Elisabeth and Barnave — Thraldom in Paris — Disappointment of the Queen — Return of the Princesse de Lamballe — Kindness of the Queen toward those whose mismanagement had caused the failure of the journey — Mercy 233

CHAPTER XVI

A new Assembly — A new constitution — Fears of poison — Death of Leopold II — Assassination of Gustavus III — The little Dauphin — The Queen's comfort — Barnave sacrifices his life — War with Austria declared — Unfortunate attempt of the King to destroy a libel against the Queen — The King refuses his consent to a decree sentencing to transportation the priests who had refused to take the schismatic oath — Insurrection of the populace — Insurrection of the 20th of June — The populace burst into the Tuileries — Coolness and courage of the King — Heroic conduct of Madame Elisabeth — Dignity of the Queen — Napoleon and the "Canaille" — The Queen seeks the intervention of the European powers — The terrible 10th of August — The royal family take refuge in the National Assembly — Forfeiture of the crown decreed 246

CHAPTER XVII

The three days at Les Feuillants — The royal family removed to the Temple tower — Arrest of the Princesse de Lamballe, and of Madame and Mademoiselle de Tourzel — Madame Elisabeth's gown — Privations and anxieties — Daily life of the royal family — The Queen's dress — The King directs the studies of his son and the Queen those of her daughter — Gross insults and petty vexations 262

CHAPTER XVIII

Horrible death of the Princesse de Lamballe — Ferocity of the mob — Savage incident at the Temple tower — Effect

PAGE

on the Queen — The King removed to the large tower — Distress of the Queen — Removal of the whole royal family to the large tower — The King's trial announced — Separation from his family 272

CHAPTER XIX

The King's trial — Malesherbes a faithful friend — A sad Christmas — How the royal family corresponded with the King — The New Year — The King's sentence — His last requests — A reprieve of three days refused — Farewell interview with his family — The Abbé Edgeworth de Firmont 281

CHAPTER XX

The King prepares for death — His kindness to the last — He hears mass and receives communion — The Abbé Edgeworth persuades him to give up the last interview with the Queen and royal family — He bids farewell to Cléry — His last words to the porter of the prison — A fruitless attempt to save him on his way to the scaffold — He prepares for his execution — His address to the people — His death 290

CHAPTER XXI

Grief of the Queen — She remains in the closest seclusion — The Dauphin is taken away from the Queen — Her desperate resistance — The Princesses left without attendance — They perform menial work and wait on the Queen — She is removed to the Conciergerie prison — Madame Richard — Narrative of her servant, Rosalie Lamorlière — Arrival of the Queen — Her cell — The child of Madame Richard.. 297

CHAPTER XXII

Gentleness and patience of the Queen — Care of Rosalie — Enforced idleness — Her watch and diamond rings taken from her — A fatal flower — A pricked paper — Arrest of

PAGE

the jailer and his family — The Queen transferred to another cell — A new jailer — The Queen brought to trial — Attempt to obtain scandalous testimony from her own children — Her sentence unexpected by her — Her letter to Madame Elisabeth — Rosalie — Ministrations of a constitutional priest refused — "Errors, but not crimes." 307

CHAPTER XXIII

The last insults — Dress of the Queen when going to the scaffold — The sentence read to her — The executioner ties her hands and cuts off her hair — The cart — The last progress through the streets — An American witness — The Tuileries — Scene on the scaffold — The last look of Marie-Antoinette 320

CHAPTER XXIV

Sequel — The trial of Madame Elisabeth — Her fortitude at the scaffold — The cruelty practised on the Dauphin — His horrible isolation — The pity that was shown too late — His last words of his mother — Strength of character shown by the surviving princess, Madame Royale — Sent to Austria in 1795 — Married to her cousin 326

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Marie-Antoinette ..... Frontispiece

FACING PAGE

Maria Theresa of Austria, Mother of Marie-Antoinette 8

Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette at the Age of Fifteen Years 16

The Palace and Park of Versailles 24

Marie-Adelaide-Clotilde-Xavière de France 32

Louis-Stanislas-Xavier de Bourbon, Comte de Provence, afterward Louis XVIII 40

Antoine-Paul-Jacques de Quelen de Stuer de Caussade, Duc de la Vauguyon 48

Marie-Louise-Thérèse-Victoire de France 56

Marie-Adelaide de France 64

Salle des Glaces, Palace of Versailles 72

The Temple of Love, Versailles 80

The Dairy and Tower of Marlborough, Versailles .. 80

Sophie-Philippine-Elisabeth-Justine de France 96

Louise-Marie de France 112

Duchesse de Polignac 128

FACING PAGE

House of the Seigneur, Petit Trianon 144

Armand Gaston, Cardinal de Rohan 160

Comtesse de la Motte 168

Diamond Necklace 176

Bed of Marie-Antoinette 192

Petit Trianon, Versailles 208

Madame Elisabeth 224

Chamber of Louis XIV 240

The Dauphin Louis-Joseph and his Sister the Duchesse D'Angoulême 256

Marie-Thérèse-Louise de Savoie-Carignan, Princesse de Lamballe 272

Louis XVI 288

Marie-Antoinette and her Children 304

Marie-Antoinette 320

THE STORY OF MARIE-ANTOINETTE

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CHAPTER I

Character of Maria Theresa — Her political views — Birth of Marie-Antoinette — A bad omen — Marriages of the daughters of Maria Theresa — The destiny of Marie-Antoinette — Her education — Affianced at fourteen to the heir of the crown of France — Her mother's parting advice — An accredited spy — Her mother's aim — Picture of the Court of France — The King — Madame du Barry — The Dauphin — The daughters of the King — Adverse elements.

THE story of Marie-Antoinette is universally admitted to be full of interest. All have heard more or less of her beauty, her brave spirit, her harrowing misfortunes, her tragic death. And this history, more enthralling than any romance, belongs almost to our own time: the fathers of men who may be still living saw her, and talked of her to their sons. This gives a peculiar, life-like reality to the sad tale, of which so many traces still remain in France. The beautiful portraits at Versailles, recalling the features of the young and lovely Queen; the regal bedchamber from which she fled, where the populace rushed to shed the blood of the hated

"Austrian," while her faithful guards laid down their lives to defend her; the cell at the Conciergerie prison, from which, one October morning, the still brave, still dignified victim was led to the scaffold, to expiate, as she said herself, "errors, but not *crimes*"—all these may yet be seen.

The Royalist writers have drawn a glorified and saintly picture of the unhappy Queen; those of the opposite party have striven to blacken her fame in order to explain, if not to justify, the judicial murder by which her life was sacrificed. But the real Marie-Antoinette has not yet been fully depicted. Recent publications of undoubted authenticity[1] throw a new light on the true character of one who was neither a saint nor yet a sinner in any grave degree, but an amiable and lovable woman, frivolous in her prosperous days, engrossed in the pursuit of amusement, thoughtless and imprudent in many of her actions and words, but who, nevertheless, in the time of adversity showed that she had inherited the heroic spirit of her mother, Maria Theresa.

The history of the great Empress, and of her early struggles when, forsaken and desolate, with her child in her arms, she made her passionate appeal to "her" Hungarians, who proclaimed in response that they would die for their "King—Maria Theresa," is well known. She was a great sovereign, a woman of masculine mind; and although the mother of sixteen children, she remained essentially

[1] Taken from the State Papers at Vienna.

a politician — a *statesman*, if such an expression may be used. Her husband, Francis of Lorraine, and after his death her sons in succession, were nominally Emperors of Germany; but Maria Theresa, who possessed, as Queen in her own right, a large portion of the Empire, was the ruling spirit and the real sovereign. Her life was one long struggle with the surrounding powers, more especially Prussia, then governed by Frederick the Great, and resistance to his encroachments became the chief aim of her life. Her daughters were regarded principally as instruments for obtaining political alliances by their marriages in the reigning families, whose influence might be brought forward as a counterpoise to that of her opponent. Thus, her daughter Caroline was married to the King of Naples; Spain was conciliated by the marriage of the Archduchess Amelia to the Duke of Parma;[1] Maria Christina became the wife of Albert of Saxe-Teschen, governor of the Netherlands; but the youngest and fairest of her daughters she had destined from her earliest years for the heir to the throne of France. To secure the French alliance she had already made many sacrifices, even that of her dignity as an empress and a Christian woman by stooping to conciliate the King's favorite, Madame de Pompadour. But her cherished dream was to unite her daughter Marie-Antoinette to the Dauphin, grandson of Louis XV and heir to the French crown.

[1] Parma then belonged to the Spanish Bourbons.

Marie-Antoinette Josèphe Jeanne, of Hapsburg-Lorraine, Archduchess of Austria and future Queen of France, was born on November 2 (feast of All Souls), 1755—the day after the terrible catastrophe at Lisbon when that city was nearly destroyed by an earthquake. †

The superstitious might see here an omen of the fate which awaited the innocent child in a social convulsion far more disastrous in its consequences than the calamity which marked the day of her birth!

The son of the first Dauphin of France in the reign of Louis XV, and future heir to the crown, was born a year before the daughter of Maria Theresa, who, from her earliest years, was carefully prepared for the destiny which her mother hoped to secure for her. She was taught the correct pronunciation of French by two actors of the Théâtre Français, while the French Abbé de Vermond was appointed to direct her education, which, however, was unhappily very incomplete. The writers who glorify the maternal care and vigilance of Maria Theresa are contradicted by the most trustworthy witnesses; the truth seeming to be that the great Empress, engrossed by her political cares, left her children far too completely to the discretion of governesses and subordinates, who were neither very capable nor, perhaps, very conscientious. Drawings were shown to the Empress as the work of Marie-Antoinette which the latter afterward declared she had never touched, and this "make-believe" system seems to have been carried on throughout.

The Abbé de Vermond directed only her French studies; but although a good and well-meaning man, the results which he obtained were far from creditable to his efforts. He does not seem to have had the art either of interesting her in any serious pursuit, or of acquiring proper control over her mind and character. Her handwriting even, as proved by autographs, was utterly unformed and childish at the time of her arrival at the court of France, and her spelling was defective.

Through the manœuvers of her imperial mother, and the influence of the Duc de Choiseul, then Prime Minister of France, who favored the Austrian alliance, the marriage was settled at the earliest possible age of the Dauphin and of the Archduchess, the bride being only fourteen, and the bridegroom a year older.

On the 21st of January, 1770, Marie-Antoinette received the wedding-ring sent by the Dauphin. The 21st of January! On that very day, twenty-three years later, Louis XVI ascended the scaffold! But who could then foresee what the future would bring forth?

On April 16 the official demand was made to the widowed Empress, in the name of the "most Christian King," by the Marquis de Durfort.

On the 17th the Archduchess solemnly renounced her rights in Austria. On the 19th a ceremony of marriage by proxy was performed (the Archduke Maximilian representing the Dauphin of France), and

the official signatures were then appended to the imperial register of births, deaths, and marriages. It is said that through one of those mysterious forebodings which are sometimes felt on solemn occasions, the hand of Maria Theresa trembled as she signed her name to the record sealing her daughter's fate.

The young Princess was then required to spend three days in meditation and prayer, as a preparation for her future state. On April 21, after receiving holy communion, she was taken to pray before the tombs of her ancestors, where lay the father who had loved her with peculiar affection, and whom she had lost in her early childhood.

Then came the final parting from her mother, the last meeting in this world, for in those days few people traveled, and sovereigns never left their states.

In the case of Marie-Antoinette not only her mother and the imperial family deeply felt the pangs attending such a separation, but the household and even the city of Vienna mourned the departure of the bright, amiable girl, whom all loved. But it must be; and, amidst the tears of all who knew and loved her, Marie-Antoinette went forth to her unknown fate.

Before the last heartrending embrace, Maria Theresa gave her daughter a plan and rule of life "to be read over every month." Part of this seems to be the "cut-and-dried" advice taken from a devotional book; but here and there, more particularly

in a private supplement of instructions, the eager, earnest tones, evidently of the Empress herself, are in marked contrast with the rest.

"Have no curiosity — this is a point on which I have great fears for you. Avoid all familiarity with your subordinates. Ask Monsieur and Madame de Noailles,[1] and even insist, that they should tell you what you ought to do; and request that they should warn you sincerely of anything to be corrected in your manner or your speech, or in any other respect. Do not be ashamed of asking advice, and do nothing out of your own head. At the beginning of every month I will despatch a special messenger to Paris; meanwhile you can prepare your letters so as to send them immediately on the arrival of this messenger. Mercy[2] will have orders for his return. You can also write to me by post, but only on unimportant matters such as every one may know. Destroy my letters, which will enable me to write to you more openly; I will do the same as regards yours. Say nothing about domestic affairs here; there is nothing but what would be uninteresting and even wearisome. Speak of your family with truth and moderation."

Elsewhere she says very sagely: "I should in no wise be desirous of your introducing any novelties or doing anything contrary to the custom of France; you must pretend to nothing peculiar to yourself,

1 They were appointed to conduct the Princess to Versailles.
2 The Ambassador of the German Empire at the court of France.

nor quote what is done here, nor try that such should be imitated."

This judicious advice might be followed with advantage by many young brides even in private life, but the state of the court of France at that time was such as to render the future position of the innocent but thoughtless and imperfectly educated young Princess one of peculiar difficulty and peril.

The King was an aged libertine, entirely engrossed by disgraceful pleasures, worn out physically and mentally by the excesses of his life, bearing the yoke of his favorite, the Comtesse du Barry, who reigned supreme, but who was in fact the tool of ambitious politicians by whom she had been pushed into her prominent position for the sole purpose of having a ready instrument at their service.

The Comtesse du Barry was a woman of previously disreputable character, and the lowest possible social condition, with whom a ruined spendthrift, the Comte du Barry, had been induced by bribery to go through a form of marriage in order to give her sufficient rank for admittance at the court, where she at once became the reigning favorite of Louis XV. The first Dauphin, son of the King, had died several years before, to the great grief of the nation, for his conduct and principles were in strong contrast to those of his father. His wife, the Dauphine, an exceedingly estimable woman strongly attached to her husband, did not long survive his loss. They left five children: three sons—the Duc de

MARIA THERESA OF AUSTRIA, MOTHER OF MARIE-ANTOINETTE.

Berry, who after his father's death became Dauphin and heir apparent to the throne of France (afterward king as Louis XVI), the Comte de Provence, and the Comte d'Artois (later known respectively as Louis XVIII and Charles X); and two daughters — Madame Clotilde and Madame Elisabeth. The title of "Madame" used at the French court was attended with such complications that some explanation is necessary to make the following narrative intelligible.

The son or grandson of the King, heir apparent to the throne, was called the "Dauphin," and his wife the "Dauphine"; this was the title of the ancient sovereigns of the province of Dauphiné, annexed to the possessions of the French crown. The brother of the King was called "Monsieur," without any other appellation, and his wife "Madame." The younger brothers and sons of the King were also called "Monsieur," but with a title annexed, thus: "Monsieur" Comte de Provence, "Monsieur" Comte d'Artois; their wives were "Madame" Comtesse de Provence, "Madame" Comtesse d'Artois. The King's daughters and granddaughters in the direct line, the "Filles de France," or Daughters of France, as they were proudly entitled, were also called "Madame," but distinguished by their Christian names. Thus, the unmarried daughters of Louis XV were called collectively "Mesdames de France," and individually Madame Adelaide, Madame Victoire, Madame Sophie, Madame Louise.

The Queen, Marie Leckzinska, had died some time before the marriage of the Dauphin, her grandson; and since her death the position of "first lady in the land" had been held by Madame Adelaide, a clever woman of an imperious, domineering temper, who was by no means pleased to yield her prerogatives, as she must needs do, to the child-wife of a boyish nephew. Madame Victoire, fat, sleepy, and good-natured, cared little for any thing beyond a good dinner and her other comforts, but was led and governed by her elder sister; Madame Sophie was singularly ill-favored, very shy, very disagreeable, and utterly insignificant; the youngest and most amiable of the four sisters, Madame Louise, had recently left the court for a Carmelite convent, with the intention of enduring the terrible austerities of that order, according to the faith of the Catholic Church, as a victim of expiation to obtain the salvation of her father's soul, which seemed in considerable peril when his licentious life was considered. This act of self-immolation deprived the young Marie-Antoinette of one who might have been her best friend at the court of Louis XV, for Madame Louise was thoroughly good and sincere. The other "Mesdames de France" were, in fact, estimable but narrow-minded and ill-educated spinsters, holding a small court of their own (wheels within wheels), greatly influenced by their attendants, in open war with their father's favorite, and strongly antagonistic to the party led by the Duc de Choiseul,

who shocked their feelings by his so-called "philosophical" and really anti-religious views, as well as by the part which he had played in the expulsion of the Jesuits. They disliked Austria, and they disliked Choiseul; consequently they were not disposed to give a very cordial welcome to an Austrian archduchess chosen by Choiseul as a bride for their nephew: the latter, a heavy, good-natured lad of fifteen, well-meaning, but overpowered with shyness, and wholly undeveloped; unformed in mind as well as in manners.

Such was the court to which a thoughtless child was sent, where a woman of ripe years and cultivated intellect would have required the greatest prudence and caution to steer her way among innumerable difficulties.

Maria Theresa, though not fully informed of the real state of the case, yet knew enough to have a strong desire to give suitable guidance to her daughter. She consequently arranged with the German ambassador, Comte de Mercy-Argenteau, a secret correspondence by which she was to be informed of everything concerning the young Dauphine. Mercy kept a journal, which was regularly sent to the Empress, in which the most minute details of the daily life of the Princess are jotted down; every act, every incautious word, is registered. Being in utter ignorance of this agreement, Marie-Antoinette treated Mercy with full confidence, often expressing astonishment at the information possessed by the Empress

concerning her, but never dreaming that Mercy, whom she entirely trusted, was in fact an accredited spy through whom everything was revealed.

There is, it must be owned, something revolting in the part played by Mercy. True, the revelations were made only to her mother; but she was Empress of Germany, and while Marie-Antoinette ought henceforward to have been devoted to the interests of France, the country over which her husband was to reign, the one idea of Maria Theresa was the prosperity and welfare of her own empire. She gave excellent advice to her daughter; she earnestly wished that she should acquire every virtue and every charm: but with the object of obtaining influence to be used in the interest of Germany. The position of Maria Theresa was, however, so transcendental, she was so revered by her subjects as an almost superhuman being, that obedience to the wishes of "Her Sacred Majesty" seemed a sufficient justification for what can scarcely be considered honorable conduct.

It would, however, have been well for poor Marie-Antoinette had she followed more closely the advice contained in the letters of her austere mother, whose clear judgment was not to be deceived, and whose eagle glance saw so distinctly the future consequences of her daughter's youthful follies.

CHAPTER II

The Archduchess arrives at the Pavilion of Exchange in an island on the Rhine — The etiquette observed — Arrival at Compiègne, where she meets the King and the Dauphin — Arrival at Versailles — The marriage ceremony — The apartments of the Dauphine — The beauty of the young bride — The Abbé de Vermond — Hostility of the Duc de la Vauguyon — Madame de Noailles — Worries over etiquette — Daily life described in a letter to Maria Theresa — How pictures were painted by a queen — The neglected education of Marie-Antoinette — Incessant spying on her actions — A duke listening at doors — Madame du Barry — Intrigues to influence the Dauphin.

ON May 6, 1770, after having, in those days of slow traveling, left Vienna on the 21st of April, Marie-Antoinette reached Schutteren — the last German town before Kehl — and the bridge over the Rhine. A pavilion had been erected on the island in the middle of the river, where she was to be solemnly given to the French envoys sent to receive her, and where she was to meet her French household.

It was noticed with surprise that the walls of the temporary building erected for this impressive ceremony were hung with tapestry representing, by the most extraordinary choice imaginable, the story of Medea and Jason. In addition to this ill-omened reception, the weather was dark and stormy when

Marie-Antoinette crossed the threshold of the Pavilion of Exchange, as it was called; and a dark, threatening cloud, coming from the city of Strasburg, was slowly advancing toward her over the Rhine.

The three envoys of the French king stood in the central division as the door opened on the Austrian side and the Archduchess appeared. She advanced toward a platform in the center of the room while the formal surrender to the French was read over; her Austrian attendants then kissed her hand and disappeared into the Austrian division, closing the door of separation. The Princess was then taken into a room on the French side, where she was undressed and clothed from head to foot in French attire, according to custom on such occasions. When ready, the door was thrown open, and the Princess appeared in full dress, as "Dauphine." Her French household was then formally presented to her; when, gracefully running to the Comtesse de Noailles, her *dame d'honneur*, or first lady, the young Princess embraced her with the earnest request that she would be her guide and counsel in the performance of the new duties which awaited her.

On the French bank of the Rhine one of the sixty traveling-carriages sent to meet her took the Princess to Strasburg; but meanwhile the storm, which had grown more and more dark and lowering during the ceremony, burst over the city, and terrific peals of thunder mingled with the cheers of the crowd

as Marie-Antoinette passed through the gates — a dreary entry into her future kingdom!

After a short rest at Strasburg, the Princess continued her journey, finding in every town an enthusiastic reception, with the usual speeches, flowers, and cries of the crowd, while all the bells rang a festive peal.

On the 14th of May she reached Compiègne, where, at some distance from the town, she met the Duc de Choiseul, whom she welcomed as a friend. A few minutes later, as she crossed the forest of Compiègne, the King and the Dauphin, with a numerous escort, made their appearance coming to meet her.

Marie-Antoinette immediately stepped from her carriage, and, running toward the King, threw herself on her knees at his feet, when he immediately raised and embraced her. The Dauphin, overpowered with shyness, hardly dared to look at his bride, but ventured to "salute her on the cheek."

The next day the whole court left Compiègne for Versailles, stopping at St. Denis, where Marie-Antoinette wished to see her new aunt, Madame Louise, then a novice at the Carmelite convent, which caused intense delight to the nuns. She spent the night at the small château of La Muette, where the King presented her with a pearl necklace brought to France by Anne of Austria, and worn by the queens and dauphines of France, in which each pearl was the size of a hazel-nut and all were exactly of the same water.

On the 16th of May, 1770, at ten o'clock in the morning, Marie-Antoinette made her official entry into that celebrated palace of Versailles which became her home till the outbreak of the French Revolution.

The definitive marriage ceremony took place that morning in the chapel of Versailles, and was followed by great rejoicings. The youth of the bride, her childish grace, impressed every one favorably, and even the hostile "Mesdames" were propitiated. She was so young, so pretty, so ingenuous, so caressing, that the imperious Madame Adelaide at once concluded that she would be easily governed and directed in all things; Madame Victoire, naturally indulgent and good-natured, saw in her only a pretty plaything whom she could not help loving; Madame Sophie never had any opinion of her own, so she followed in her sisters' steps, without much cordiality — but that no one could expect from her. The King told Mercy that he found the young Dauphine lively, but "rather childish"; adding, however, "but that is only natural at her age." The heavy, shy Dauphin was not demonstrative; still he admitted that he liked her face and conversation, that she was very agreeable, and that he was altogether well pleased.

The memoirs of the time all dwell upon the promises of her yet undeveloped beauty: the noble cast of her features, her brilliant complexion, the golden shade of her beautiful hair, her graceful manner,

LOUIS XVI AND MARIE-ANTOINETTE AT THE AGE OF 15 YEARS.

and the remarkable dignity of her attitude. She spoke French well, with a slight German accent and some German idioms; but she was so young and so completely surrounded by French attendants that these traces of her foreign origin soon disappeared.

On the first arrival of Marie-Antoinette at Versailles the traditional apartments of the queens of France were not ready to receive her, and for the first six months she resided in temporary rooms on the ground floor of the palace. After this period she removed to the first floor, where a suite of splendid rooms opening out of the "Galerie des Glaces," or Hall of Mirrors, was devoted to her use. The bedchamber had been used by Marie-Thérèse, consort of Louis XIV, by the Dauphine (mother of Louis XV), and by Queen Marie Leckzinska, his consort. All the princes and princesses of France in the direct line had been born in this splendid apartment, which is still shown to visitors.

The immense "Galerie des Glaces" fills the projecting center of the palace, looking toward the gardens; the large corner room with six immense windows, called "Salon de la Paix," which follows, leads into the Queen's bedchamber, looking to the south toward the sheet of water called "Pièce d'eau des Suisses," framed in wooded hills. Nearer the palace are a parterre and the two staircases called "Escaliers des Cent Marches," or Hundred Steps.[1] These lead to the building called "l'Orangerie,"

[1] Literally the steps number one hundred and three.

where twelve hundred orange-trees were sheltered in winter.

Such was the view on which Marie-Antoinette's eyes rested till the outbreak of the Revolution, when the royal family was forcibly taken to the Tuileries. The bedchamber is now empty and desolate, the only traces of her residence there being the large iron screws which secured the canopy over her bed, still to be distinguished in the ceiling, and a small door through which she escaped when the infuriated populace burst into the palace to take her life. This door led through a dark passage, lighted with lamps day and night, to the King's apartments, and was then concealed by hangings of Gobelin tapestry, which, separated by large mirrors, covered the walls. The bed was raised on steps behind a gilded balustrade; near the bed was a splendid dressing-table, which was pushed into the middle of the room for the official toilet, and was the handsomest piece of furniture that it contained. There were also arm-chairs with down cushions, tables for writing, etc., and two chests of drawers of elaborate workmanship. The curtains and hangings of the bed and windows were of rich but plain blue silk. The "tabourets," or stools, for those who had the privilege of being seated in the royal presence, with a sofa for the Queen's use, were placed against the walls, according to the formal custom of the time. The canopy of the bed was adorned with Cupids playing with garlands and holding gilt lilies, the royal flower.

On the death of Marie Leckzinska all the furniture of her room had been given to her first lady, Madame de Noailles, and the room had remained unoccupied; all had therefore to be prepared anew for the Dauphine.

Madame de Noailles, having been *dame d'honneur* to the late Queen, was naturally appointed to the same post in the household of the young Dauphine; unfortunately the habits acquired when attending a very precise and aged princess rendered her particularly unfitted to direct a wilful, merry girl of fourteen, whom she annoyed incessantly by remonstrating on some unconscious breach of etiquette. Madame de Noailles was essentially the court lady, stiff and formal, entirely absorbed by the rules of her position, and looking upon the smallest breach of custom as little less than a sin. The Princess was respectfully chided for having forgotten this or that detail of etiquette, or told that her smiles and bows had not been properly distributed according to rank, till the young Dauphine, who had a keen sense of the ridiculous, became both exasperated and diverted by the constant anxiety of her *dame d'honneur*. Madame de Noailles seemed to be perpetually in the agonized state attributed to some old lord in waiting at one of Queen Victoria's first drawing-rooms, when, seeing the Queen make a move toward a lady presented, he cried aloud in great alarm, "Don't kiss her, Ma'am! She is not a peeress!" the honor of a kiss from the sovereign being the privilege of peeresses.

Marie-Antoinette had been ill prepared by the simplicity of the court of Vienna for such minute observances. The Empress was so revered by the people, the imperial family was so loved, that it was not necessary to awaken respect by so many of the proverbial "externals." On the other hand, the intense haughtiness which lay behind prevented any close contact with that half-nobility which had pushed its way into the precincts of the court of France. Such unexceptionable pedigrees and quarterings were required before any one could hold a post giving familiar access to "Her Sacred Majesty," that all were of the same rank around her, and the nice distinctions of the French court were unknown.

Unfortunately for Marie-Antoinette, the Abbé de Vermond, who had accompanied her to France as reader, and who was strangely deficient in tact and judgment, instead of remembering the wise advice of Maria Theresa to her daughter, not to talk of Vienna or what was done there, constantly reminded her of her mother's court, ridiculing to a willing listener the manifold ceremonies adopted in France.

The Abbé was an ill-bred man, of inferior birth and social education, who owed to his position as teacher of Marie-Antoinette exceptional favors at the court of Vienna, which had in some degree turned his brain. He presumed upon these past privileges to assert what he conceived to be his rightful position at Versailles, often offending the

personages who through their recognized rank held superior posts of honor at the court, with whom he affected a tone of equality which naturally caused great displeasure on the part of those who expected deferential respect.

On the 8th of June, three weeks after the arrival of the young Princess, Mercy went to the palace to deliver into her hands a letter from her mother, the Empress, full of good advice.

"The only real happiness in this world," she wrote, "is that which comes of a happy marriage. I can speak from experience. All depends on the wife: if she be obliging, amiable, and *amusing*."

Again the Empress warns her against familiarity, well knowing her good-natured, easy temper; also against the demands which would assail her from those wishing to use her influence in their favor—an error into which Marie-Antoinette, forgetting her mother's warnings, often fell at a later period.

Mercy reached the palace during the usual card-playing; but as soon as the Dauphine saw him she called him to her, saying that she wished to speak to him. He urged her to finish the game, but as soon as possible she rose.

"Seeing that I had a paper in my hand," says Mercy, "she at once understood that it was a letter from your Majesty, and seized it with great eagerness, exclaiming, '*Gott sei Dank!*'[1] showing much joy at receiving this letter, which she read immediately."

[1] God be thanked!

But troubles were already gathering round Marie-Antoinette, and her wise mother not being within reach, she was anxious to consult Mercy as to what she should better do.

It was indeed necessary for the poor child to have a friend near her, for she was surrounded by opponents, not the least important of whom was the Duc de la Vauguyon, State Tutor, or, as it was termed, "Governor," of the Dauphin. In this instance there was no personal animosity, but only excessive jealousy of any influence which might counterbalance his own over the docile but apathetic and obtuse Dauphin. He knew that the pretty young wife was too childish to be feared, but those around her might make her their instrument, and he particularly disliked and dreaded the Abbé de Vermond.

The difficulty which Marie-Antoinette wished to lay before her adviser reveals the extraordinary disorder which prevailed in the court; for she informed Mercy that the persons who now held posts in her household, and who previously were employed in other ways, had not been paid their salaries for six months, and that Madame de Noailles urged her to interfere by speaking herself to the Contrôleur-Général.[1] What was she to do?

Mercy approved, but had no time to say more, as the supper was served. When he went out the Comtesse de Noailles summoned him to her apartments, and there he learned that the Duc de la Vauguyon

[1] Controller-General of the household.

was trying to get rid of the Abbé de Vermond on pretense that his office of reader was a mere sinecure, and that he was useless and out of place at court. Madame de Noailles complained bitterly of the proceedings of the Duc de la Vauguyon, who tried in every way, by incessant misrepresentations, to diminish the attraction felt by the King toward the young Dauphine, adding that he caused Madame de Noailles herself so much annoyance by his incessant intrigues that she could bear it no longer, and would send in her resignation.

Mercy felt that although Madame de Noailles was not exactly the most desirable person in the world for the supreme position which she filled in the Dauphine's household, yet that she was an estimable and thoroughly respectable woman, which in such a court might not be the case with her successor. He therefore exerted all the influence that he could command to smooth over difficulties and pacify quarrels, interfering successfully with the King to prevent the dismissal of the Abbé de Vermond.

The cloud had blown over, but Mercy took advantage of the threatened storm to work upon the good feelings of Marie-Antoinette by telling her that the Abbé could not, in justice to himself, retain his position unless the Princess accepted his services.

The good Abbé had never known how to interest his pupil in her studies or readings, and certainly seems to have been something of what is familiarly called a bore; but affectionate and warm-hearted as

was Marie-Antoinette, she could not bear to be the cause of the departure of an old and tried friend. Consequently, though with evident reluctance, she promised to resume regular occupation under his direction. She had just reached the age when emancipation from school-room tasks is most earnestly desired, although she was still so childish that Mercy complains of her hoydenish ways, her fondness for romping with the young children of her attendants, and the consequent disorder of her dress. He notes also what were always marked characteristics of Marie-Antoinette — a strong sense of the ridiculous, and considerable pungency in the manner of calling attention to anything of the kind which caught her fancy.

In this, as in many other respects, Madame de Noailles ought to have exercised a wise and restraining influence; but, although estimable, she was essentially narrow-minded, and so deeply imbued with respect for royalty that she dared not oppose the wishes of her young charge, limiting her solicitude to the minute observances of court etiquette. On this point alone she incessantly tormented the wilful young Princess, who, wearied and impatient, finally gave her the nickname of "Madame l'Etiquette."

"Oh! we must behave well now," she would say; "here comes Madame l'Etiquette!"

We will let Marie-Antoinette herself relate the particulars of her daily life, in a letter to her mother dated July 12, 1770 — two months after her arrival at Versailles:

THE PALACE AND PARK OF VERSAILLES.

"Choisy,[1] 12th July.

"Madame my very dear Mother: I cannot express how much I am affected by your Majesty's kindness, and I protest that I have not yet received one of your dear letters without tears of regret filling my eyes at being parted from such a kind and tender mother; and although I am very happy here, I should earnestly wish to return to see my dear, very dear family, if only for a short time.

. . . . . .

"We have been here since yesterday, and from one o'clock in the afternoon, when we dine, till one in the morning, we cannot return to our own apartments, which is very disagreeable to me. After dinner we have cards till six o'clock; then we go to the play till half-past nine; then supper; then cards again till one o'clock, sometimes even half-past one; only yesterday the King, seeing that I was tired out, kindly dismissed me at eleven, to my very great satisfaction, and I slept very well till half-past ten.

"Your Majesty is very kind to show so much interest in me even to the extent of wishing for an account of how I spend my time habitually.[2] I will say, therefore, that I rise at ten o'clock, or nine, or half-past nine, and after dressing I say my prayers; then I breakfast, after which I go to my aunts',[3] where I usually meet the King. This lasts

[1] One of the royal residences, destroyed during the Revolution.
[2] At Versailles.
[3] The "Mesdames."

till half-past ten. At eleven I go to have my hair dressed. At noon the 'Chambre' is called, and any one of sufficient rank may come in. I put on my rouge[1] and wash my hands before everybody; then the gentlemen go out; the ladies stay, and I dress before them. At twelve is mass; when the King is at Versailles I go to mass with him and my husband and my aunts; if he is not there I go with Monsieur the Dauphin, but always at the same hour. After mass we dine together before everybody,[2] but it is over by half-past one, as we both eat quickly. I then go to Monsieur the Dauphin; if he is busy I return to my own apartments, where I read, I write, or I work, for I am embroidering a vest for the King, which does not get on quickly, but I trust that, with God's help, it will be finished in a few years. [!] At three I go to my aunts', where the King usually comes at that time. At four the Abbé comes to me; at five the master for the harpsichord, or the singing-master, till six. At half-past six I generally go to my aunts' when I do not go out. You must know that my husband almost always comes with me to my aunts'. At seven, card-playing till nine; but when the weather is fine I go out, and then the card-playing takes place in my aunts' apartments instead of mine. At nine, supper; when the King is absent my aunts come to take supper with us; if

[1] Rouge was then a recognized part of court dress.

[2] Any well-dressed people were admitted to see the dinners of the royal family, which they witnessed separated from them by a railing only. Marie-Antoinette greatly disliked the custom.

the King is there, we go to them after supper, and we wait for the King, who comes usually at a quarter before eleven; but I lie on a large sofa and sleep till his arrival; when he is not expected we go to bed at eleven. Such is my day.

"I entreat you, my very dear mother, to forgive me if my letter is too long; but my greatest pleasure is to be thus in communication with your Majesty. I ask pardon also for the blotted letter, but I have had to write two days running at my toilet, having no other time at my disposal; and if I do not answer all questions exactly, I trust that your Majesty will make allowances for my having too obediently burned your letter. I must finish this, as I have to dress and go to the King's mass. I have the honor to be your Majesty's most submissive daughter, MARIE-ANTOINETTE."

After reading this graphic account of the frivolous obligations inseparable from the court life of the period, can any one be surprised that a girl not yet fifteen was carried away by the current of the stream, and felt no inclination for a more useful or more serious life? It was so easy and natural to plead impossibility; all the princesses she saw lived in the same manner, and did little but courtesy to the King at stated hours, and put on and off their cumbrous court dresses.[1] Why should she alone be expected to employ her time usefully and cultivate

1 The state dress of the Dauphine, mother of Louis XVI, weighed sixty-five pounds.

her mind? The princesses of the period were credited with accomplishments without much personal trouble. Pictures were shown, and may still be seen, signed by Marie Leckzinska, the consort of Louis XV, and supposed to be her work. How were they executed? When the Queen went to her painting-room an artist was in attendance, who sketched all the outlines and prepared the faces and hands with all the most difficult parts. The palette was ready for the Queen. The artist took up the color on a brush, which he handed to her Majesty, repeating, "To the right — to the left — higher — lower, Madame." When she had daubed the canvas to her satisfaction during the short time at her disposal, she left the room to perform her royal duties; the artist then hastened to scrape and touch up the painting, which the poor Queen honestly imagined to be her own performance. In the same manner, when a royal lady undertook a piece of embroidery which was to be shown as her work, a clever needlewoman picked out stitches and put in others, till the whole presented the appearance of perfection. Matters are managed very differently in modern times; but the education of Marie-Antoinette herself had been carried on in this fashion, and she had innocently caused the dismissal of one of her governesses by telling the Empress that all her writing was traced in pencil, and she had only to go over it with a pen.

In her letters to Mercy, the Empress complains

bitterly of her daughter's handwriting and spelling, and again and again urges the necessity of taking up her education seriously. But it was very late to begin regular studies.

In answer to an indignant letter from Maria Theresa, Mercy states that he spoke to the Abbé de Vermond, who acknowledged deficiencies, but maintained that the Dauphine never wrote so badly as when addressing her mother; the reason being that she did not consider what she wrote to be safe, and consequently delayed till the special messenger was about to leave, writing then in such haste that her letters were full of "inaccuracies due to precipitation." Whether with just cause or not, the Dauphine considered no papers safe in her apartments; she dreaded the use of false keys, or that her own should be taken from her pockets at night. Her fears were carried to such an extent that she actually took her mother's letters to bed with her, as the only means of keeping them secure till the next day.

What a picture of life at the court of Louis XV!

That the caution of Marie-Antoinette was not entirely unfounded is proved from the fact that the Duc de la Vauguyon was actually caught listening at the door of the room where the Dauphine was conversing privately with her husband. Marie-Antoinette, in a letter to her mother, relates this disgraceful act, saying: "A servant, who was either very honest or very stupid, threw the door open, and there was the duke standing bolt upright, without

being able to get away. I remarked to my husband how very objectionable it was for people to listen at doors, and he took it very well."

As yet there was only childish friendship between the boyish Prince and his young wife; he was amused at her playful ways, and good-naturedly submitted to all her wishes, even to the prohibition of his favorite dainties, which disagreed with him, and which she ordered to be removed from the dinner-table without allowing him to partake of them. As he possessed the enormous appetite which characterized the Bourbons, this must have been a trial of temper for the young husband.

Meanwhile the Duc de la Vauguyon was not inactive, and did not scruple to put forward Madame du Barry as a means of keeping his influence over the Dauphin. The latter had boyishly expressed a wish to join the King's private hunting and shooting parties. Madame du Barry, to whom this was made known, immediately informed the King, who gave the required permission. The consequence was that the Dauphin, a boy of fifteen, was thus authorized not only to join the sport, but also to attend the suppers with the favorite which followed at the King's shooting-box called Saint-Hubert, where, as Mercy solemnly states, "the rules of propriety are not always scrupulously observed."

The "Mesdames," not unnaturally, were much alarmed at this emancipation of the young Prince, and at once determined to acquaint him with the

real position of Madame du Barry and all the mischief that she had already caused. The Dauphin was much shocked; his honest nature at once revolted, and from that time he treated Madame du Barry with marked aversion. To his young wife he showed increased affection and confidence, entirely agreeing with her feelings as to the Duc de la Vauguyon, and expressing his own with regard to Madame du Barry, though not without his usual caution.

Unhappily, Marie-Antoinette, childish as she was, repeated what she heard from the Dauphin to the "Mesdames," who in their turn entertained their attendants with this private gossip: hence incessant bickerings, intrigues, and jealousies.

In vain Maria Theresa writes to her daughter: "Keep a neutral position in everything. . . . I desire you to be more reserved than ever as regards what is going on; listen to no secrets, and have no curiosity. I am sorry to be obliged to say, *confide nothing*—even to your aunts, whom I esteem so much. I have my reasons for saying this."

But the open-hearted nature of Marie-Antoinette often prevented the prudence which her wise mother so earnestly inculcated.

CHAPTER III

Objections to the Dauphine's wish to ride on horseback — Donkeys allowed, as "these animals are not at all dangerous" — What is to be done when a Dauphine of France falls from a donkey? — The Dauphine yields to the temptation of riding a horse — A solemn ambassador — Threats of anger on the part of Maria Theresa — The Dauphine greatly frightened — Amiable nature of Marie-Antoinette — A Dauphine of France loses her shoe in the mud — Picture of the court of Louis XV — The Dauphine's position — Difficulties and court cabals — Disgrace of Choiseul — The Dauphine proudly refuses to propitiate Madame du Barry — The Dauphin and his brother fight in the presence of Marie-Antoinette — Marriages of the Comte de Provence and the Comte d'Artois — Letters of Maria Theresa — Illness of the King — Particulars of his death — What etiquette required of a gentleman in waiting.

THE young Dauphine had a great wish to ride on horseback, which, in modern days, would give rise to no objections; but Mercy, foreseeing the disapprobation of the Empress, applied to the King, through the Duc de Choiseul, pleading the youth of the Princess and the probable want of moderation that she would show in the practice of "such violent exercise." The King satisfied them by refusing his consent to the use of horses, but allowed donkeys. Some exceedingly quiet specimens of the race were chosen, and the Dauphine rode with her ladies in the forest, Mercy gravely assuring the Empress that "these animals are not at all dangerous."

MARIE-ADELAIDE-CLOTILDE-XAVIÈRE DE FRANCE.

BY FRANÇOIS-HUBERT DROUAIS, IN MUSEUM OF VERSAILLES.

Nevertheless, Marie-Antoinette managed to slip from her saddle and to have a harmless fall. Her ladies, much alarmed, flew to her assistance. She sat on the ground, suppressing a strong inclination to laugh, but would not be raised till they had ascertained "what was the etiquette to be observed when a Dauphine of France fell from a donkey." History does not enlighten us as to the rules observed on this momentous occasion, or the decision of "Madame l'Etiquette."

The Dauphine continued to ride her donkeys, but with an ever-increasing desire for real equestrian exercise, notwithstanding the strong objections of her mother, who wrote that she would spoil her complexion and her figure, besides many other evils. Still the wilful young Princess longed more and more for a horse, instead of the humble substitute.

Madame Adelaide — whether from a good-natured wish to satisfy her, or from a more treacherous motive, does not seem clear — suggested that she might set out for one of her donkey excursions, sending beforehand an equerry with a horse, and that at a stated place she might meet the horse and dismiss the donkey. The Dauphine, though strongly tempted, pleaded the fear of displeasing her mother, also that the King might refuse his permission; but Madame Adelaide overruled all scruples, and finally the Dauphine consented. At the appointed place the horse met her, and the young Princess rode with great delight and no danger, an equerry

holding the bridle and several attendants walking by her side. Marie-Antoinette enjoyed her ride, and not less the prospect of seeing "how Mercy would look," as she told the Duchesse de Chaulnes, who, of course, immediately repeated the childish jest to Mercy. The latter delayed attending her evening circle for a day or two, although he had letters from the Empress to deliver; but finally he made an ominously solemn entrance into the presence of the young Dauphine, who at once called him to her, asking if he knew that she had "ridden a horse."

Mercy bowed low, and gravely answered, "Oui."

The Dauphine then rejoined, with evident nervousness: "I was in great haste to tell you, but I did not see you, although every one immediately congratulated me on what had given me so much pleasure."

Still solemn, Mercy replied that he should be much mortified if she supposed that he could join those who complimented her; that as he had real zeal and respect for what concerned her, he could only be grieved at what he thought injurious and likely to displease the Empress.

At this the poor girl's countenance changed, and, exceedingly frightened, she said earnestly with childlike simplicity: "You would throw me into despair if you said that I could grieve the Empress; I assure you that I am in great anxiety," then eagerly bringing forward as her justification the King's consent and her wish to please the Dauphin by sharing his favorite exercise. Mercy made no reply, but solemnly

delivered the letters and retired, leaving poor Marie-Antoinette more frightened than ever. The whole, according to modern appreciation, would seem to be a case of "much ado about nothing."

The next day the Princess sent for Mercy, and entreated him to take her part and to justify her in the sight of her mother, the Empress, which he consented to do, provided she would promise not to follow hunts on horseback or to gallop.

Mercy, in fact, warned Maria Theresa that as the King had consented, and the Dauphin had approved, it would be impossible to prevent Marie-Antoinette from continuing to indulge in exercise on horseback, and that the fruitless attempt might have injurious consequences with regard to the moral authority of the Empress over her daughter.

Maria Theresa answered that she knew her daughter sufficiently well to be quite convinced that nothing would prevent her from doing anything that she strongly wished to do; but that, nevertheless, she would write to her.

Marie-Antoinette waited with great anxiety for her mother's answer with regard to equestrian exercise, and eagerly asked Mercy if he had "good news" to give her. The letter of Maria Theresa, although hardly satisfactory, sufficed as a half authorization, of which she took advantage heartily.

"You say that the King approves, also the Dauphin; they must dispose of all concerning you. I have given them my pretty Antoinette."

But the Empress dwells at length on all the evils which may result from this concession, and concludes:

"Now that I have laid all this before you, I shall say no more, and shall try not to think about it."

Marie-Antoinette had carried her point, and this was all for which she really cared. Notwithstanding her childish wilfulness, her nature was so bright and amiable, that it was easy for her to win general popularity; but in what concerned the King her life was a perpetual struggle with court cabals, which created incessant difficulties. The position of Madame du Barry was a particularly sensitive point on the part of the King, to whom the favorite complained bitterly of any slight, while the ladies of the Dauphine absolutely refused to yield her the precedence which she claimed. The blame of these squabbles fell on the young Princess herself.

Still the pretty and winning Dauphine managed playfully to keep in favor with "Papa," as she called the King. The Dauphin, heavy and almost stupid as he seemed, was more and more captivated by his young wife, submitting to be scolded by her for his uncivilized ways, and ever ready to further her wishes, even when contrary to his own. He hated dancing, but as she liked it he arranged to have a ball every Monday in the private apartments of the young couple, but without ceremony, the ladies wearing white dominoes,[1] the gentlemen their ordi-

[1] A pelisse, entirely enveloping the figure.

nary court dress. These balls were highly approved by Maria Theresa, as "a great advantage to the Dauphin," whose somewhat boorish manners really considerably improved, while he retained, nevertheless, the good-natured simplicity which had always characterized him. Madame de Noailles having given a ball in her own private apartments, the Dauphin took his young wife on his arm and walked in unexpectedly, saying graciously to the hostess:

"I hope, madame, that you will admit both husband and wife. We come not to inconvenience you in any way, but only to share your amusements." This condescension was highly appreciated by all present, and the Dauphine was credited with having civilized the young Prince.

The minute difficulties and inconveniences which beset the Princess in her daily life would hardly be believed but for the testimony of competent witnesses. Mercy states in a letter to Maria Theresa: "I must call attention to the fact that the Dauphine, whose purse is nominally of six thousand livres[1] a month, has not in reality a single crown at her disposal. There are scandalous abuses here as regards money matters. The Dauphine's purse is given into the care of her treasurer, who keeps back two thousand five hundred livres every month for pensions granted by the late Queen, and which have fallen on the Dauphine without her knowing anything about them. Her *garçons de chambre* receive one

[1] The livre was rather more than the modern franc.

hundred louis a month for the Dauphine's card-playing. Whether she wins or loses, no one sees anything more of this money. The Bedchamber women take charge of all the remainder, which is usually distributed in gifts suggested by Madame de Noailles, with the forced consent of the Dauphine, who thus keeps no money at her own disposal. She is certainly not well dressed, but that is the fault of the lady who has the charge of her wardrobe. This lady pays little attention to it, and has not much taste."

The Dauphine was allowed a sum of 120,000 livres for her dress alone; but she never interfered in any way, and everything was decided, without consulting her, by the *dame d'atour*, who ordered what was necessary according to her own appreciation, and settled the bills of the various tradesmen. At the end of the year she presented incomprehensible accounts, which the Dauphine was required to sign and approve, with the result that the Dauphine's expenses greatly exceeded the allotted sum, without any fault of her own.

Mercy was called to the rescue, and discovered the most absurd extravagance. For instance, three ells of ribbon, to tie the powdering-gown of the Dauphine, were put down daily; also several ells of silk (daily!) to cover the basket in which her gloves and fan were deposited, with many other items of the same kind, noted by Mercy in solemn reprobation.

With all this waste, the arrangements around her

were strangely deficient in comfort, as is proved by a trifling incident. In the latter part of November the Dauphine and the "Mesdames," on their return from Choisy to Versailles, partly followed the King's hunt in their carriage; but at a particular place where there was a river with a ferry, the "Mesdames" became frightened, fearing an accident, and, despite the expostulations of the Dauphine, insisted upon alighting, although the ground was very muddy and marshy. Marie-Antoinette, forced to follow them, lost one of her shoes in the mud, and went back to Choisy thoroughly wet. She seems to have had there no means of changing her clothes, for she was obliged to dry them by a fire, to which she drew so near that she singed her dress. Not unnaturally, she became thoroughly chilled, and on reaching Versailles in her half-dried clothes found no fire prepared in her apartments, which did not improve matters. Of course she caught a violent cold, which, happily, was not followed by serious consequences.

But the King's hunting-parties caused other evils. The Dauphine followed them two or three times a week, and in her ready good-nature she desired cold meats and refreshments to be taken in her carriage, which she distributed herself among the courtiers as "collation." The natural consequence was that all the young men crowded round her, with the result of too much freedom and buoyancy of spirits on all sides, which greatly displeased the King.

The kindness of Marie-Antoinette, which often led

her into difficulties, was not deficient on more serious occasions, and no accident or injury to any of her servants ever failed to awaken her warmest sympathy, which was shown in the most efficacious manner. On one occasion, she was found in her apartments engaged in dressing and bandaging the wounded hand of an old servant, who had received some hurt in moving a piece of furniture at her request. The man seemed equally astonished and grateful on seeing the anxiety and regret shown by the young Princess, who attended to him as his daughter might have done. Another time, during a drive, a postilion was thrown from his horse and was seriously hurt. The Comtesse de Provence drove on with complete indifference, although the man belonged to her own stables. The Dauphine sprang from her carriage, ran to the man, and with anxious eagerness gave all necessary orders, and sent for medical assistance, refusing to leave the man till he had all the care required. On another occasion, a peasant was wounded by an infuriated stag, during one of the King's hunting-parties. The man's wife fainted, supposing her husband to be killed. The Dauphine ran to her, supported her in her arms, and gave her every assistance, with kind and soothing words of comfort. The warm heart of Marie-Antoinette never failed to respond to any appeal.

Her mother's severe letters, the troublesome interference of Mercy, the exhortations of the Abbé de Vermond, never ruffled her sweet temper or pro-

LOUIS-STANISLAS-XAVIER DE BOURBON,
COMTE DE PROVENCE, AFTERWARD LOUIS XVIII.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO. N. Y., OF A PAINTING BY JEAN-MARTIAL FREDOU,
BELONGING TO MARQUIS DE VIRIEU AT THE CHÂTEAU DE LANTILLY.

voked a word of rebellion. "I admire every day her gentleness and docility," says the Abbé de Vermond. "She allows me, in the presence of her *dame d'honneur* and her bedchamber women, to express truths which, though respectfully worded, are firm and stronger than what I used to say to her at Vienna in her private room. I know that I owe her confidence to the approbation of the Empress; but is it not remarkable that it should be persistent, and that the Dauphine should have the moral courage to keep near her a troublesome monitor in the midst of so much flattery and adulation?"

But although always gentle and submissive, there was one point in which no satisfactory result could be obtained — that of regular occupation. In vain Maria Theresa incessantly refers to troublesome questions, and insists upon a definite account of what is really done, requiring a list of the books read. The so-called "studies" with the Abbé de Vermond were, in fact, only insignificant conversations, and Marie-Antoinette began to be frightened at her mother's pertinacious inquiries.

"What am I to do? Mama wishes for an account of my readings!"

"You will surely tell the truth, Madame"; and the Abbé made fresh exhortations, with the suggestion of writing a summary of the "readings."

But how, and when? There was an incessant going in and out of officials in the Dauphine's apartments, and the Abbé dreaded suspicion of political

interference on his part if he were seen writing with her. The Dauphine might write alone, but he feared "her carelessness and indolence, which would induce her to put off the effort, and finally omit it."

"Our princes and princesses," says Vermond, "when their education is considered finished, have no regular occupation and listen to no advice. They may be governed *in fact*, but are not enlightened or directed."

This was not quite the case with Marie-Antoinette, who received remonstrances from all sides. She was full of good resolutions, sincerely promised amendment, and—with much self-reproach—went on as before!

She romped with children; she played with dogs; she laughed and chatted with "my aunts"; she followed hunts even on horseback, notwithstanding her word pledged to her mother; she danced, and so her life passed despite her dread of "mama's" scrutinizing letters.

The attention of the wise mother became, however, engrossed by a more serious matter—the impending fall of Choiseul, who had always been a stanch supporter of the Austrian alliance, and had settled the marriage of the Dauphin with the Archduchess Marie-Antoinette.

The fall of Choiseul was not only of the greatest importance to Maria Theresa, by withdrawing from the French government her most valuable friend, but it was also an event which gained greater mag-

nitude as a criterion of the influence to be attributed to Madame du Barry. Choiseul had always treated the favorite with the contempt that she deserved, and the ladies of his family had spoken of her in unsparing terms, especially his sister, the clever and spirited Beatrice de Choiseul, Duchesse de Gramont,[1] who was known to have great influence over her brother.

Madame du Barry consequently hated the whole family, and was determined to remove their obnoxious presence from Versailles, leaving nothing untried to reach this end. She playfully but incessantly teased the King, winding up her arguments by tossing oranges as she laughingly repeated: "Jump, Choiseul! Jump, Praslin!"[2]

Meanwhile her supporters importuned the King more seriously, calling his attention to the supposed danger of Choiseul's liberal views and his alleged connivance with the rebellious Parliament. Testimony which seems to have been false was brought forward to prove this; the Prince de Condé, a member of the royal family, was persuaded to speak to the King, and the chancellor threatened to resign if the prime minister were not dismissed.

What with Madame du Barry's oranges and teasing, added to the solemn warnings of politicians, the

[1] The Duchesse de Gramont died on the scaffold during the French Revolution, disdaining to save her life at the expense of a falsehood. There are two families of the same name — *Grammont* and *Gramont*.

[2] "Saute, Choiseul! Saute, Praslin!" (The Duc de Choiseul was also Duc de Praslin.)

peace of the indolent old monarch was sufficiently disturbed to induce him to get rid of Choiseul at any cost.

The prime minister was informed of his disgrace by a stern letter from the King expressing great dissatisfaction with his services, and enjoining him to retire to his country house, which he was not to leave without permission. This, in the language of the time, was called "going into banishment." Choiseul took the matter coolly, and immediately went to Paris, where he found the duchess, his wife, just sitting down to dinner.

She at once said to him: "You look like a banished man; but sit down—your dinner will not be the less good."

They dined quietly; the duke then spent the remainder of the day in the settlement of business matters, and the next morning he retired to his country-seat of Chanteloup with his wife and sister, followed by numerous friends who remained faithful to him, notwithstanding his fallen fortunes.

Mercy writes shortly afterward (April 16, 1771) to Maria Theresa, giving a strange picture of the court:

"It is almost impossible that your Majesty should form a correct idea of the horrible confusion which reigns here. The throne is disgraced by the extensive and indecent influence of the favorite, and the wickedness of her partizans.

"The nation shows its feeling by seditious remarks and disloyal pamphlets, where the person of

the sovereign is not spared. Versailles is the abode of treachery, spite, and hatred; everything is done through motives of personal interest, and all honorable feeling seems to be discarded."

Madame du Barry had proved her power, and Maria Theresa was too good a politician not to draw her own conclusions as to the necessity of conciliating the favorite. But here she met with unexpected resistance from Marie-Antoinette, who would not stoop to any advances toward a woman whom she despised.

In vain Maria Theresa brought forward the plausible argument that she had no right to judge her grandfather or to look upon Madame du Barry's position as different from that of any other lady admitted to his court. For once Marie-Antoinette was rebellious, and plainly declared to her mother that she would do anything to satisfy her except what was "contrary to honor."

Great was the wrath of the Empress, who in her reply showed so much indignation at the insinuation that she could advise anything "contrary to honor," that the poor young Dauphine finally was driven to half measures, which, as usual, satisfied no one and decidedly displeased Madame Adelaide, whose aversion for Madame du Barry was not concealed, and who required the same attitude from her nephew's wife. In all these difficulties, the Dauphin was too timorous and too undecided in his actions to be of any real use or support to the young wife thus

besieged by conflicting advice and exigencies. Although the marriage of the Comte de Provence was in serious preparation, the royal brothers were still such absolute school-boys that they quarreled and fought even in the presence of Marie-Antoinette, who on one occasion hurt her hand in trying to separate them. They were all, in fact, mere children, and should be judged as such.

The Dauphin had received a good, plain education, and possessed a considerable amount of stolid good sense, with the best and most honorable feelings. He was thoroughly kind-hearted and good-natured; unfortunately, he was conscious of his external deficiencies, and was consequently so painfully shy and timid that his natural awkwardness was considerably increased. He seldom knew what to say or do, or when it should be said or done. This unfortunate hesitation followed him through life, and was the principal cause of many misfortunes. Even toward his young wife, whom he deeply loved, he could not bring himself to show his real affection; and although always kind and particularly good-natured, he seemed indifferent and even cold in his treatment of her.

The Comte de Provence was more intelligent than his elder brother, and rather pedantic, fond of classic studies and quotations. He was jealous of his brother's superior rank, and quite convinced that he himself was far more capable of filling his position. In this he was, perhaps, not wholly mistaken. He

was reserved and prudent, but neither straightforward nor sincere; he had, however, far more tact than the Dauphin, and knew better how to steer his way through court intrigues and cabals.

The Comte d'Artois was a complete scapegrace, who behaved like a spoiled child and followed his very questionable tastes without restraint. His appearance and manners, nevertheless, distinguished him favorably from his brothers, that is, when he chose to behave like a gentleman, which was not always the case.

The question of the marriage of the Comte de Provence, soon to be followed by that of the Comte d'Artois, was a subject of fresh anxiety to Maria Theresa and her faithful Mercy. Would the Princess chosen be a friend or an enemy? What would be her influence over the King and the "Mesdames"? The final choice of a princess of Savoy, daughter of the Prince of Piedmont (afterward King of Sardinia), was agreeable to the latter,—any one rather than an Austrian,—and many cutting insinuations were thrown out by Madame Adelaide, sometimes endured with seeming unconsciousness, sometimes taken up sharply by Marie-Antoinette.

"If mama could see how things go on here, she would be less severe in her judgment of me," said the Dauphine to Mercy; "matters are really unendurable."

The Princess of Savoy arrived—shy, insignificant, and absolutely devoid of beauty. Her portraits give

the idea of a dark, full face with coarse features and thick lips, redeemed only by fine dark eyes. But the first impression of the King was unfavorable. "She is very ugly!" was his characteristic remark.

The Dauphin, with his usual blunt sincerity, expressed much the same opinion to his brother, who, to his credit, replied with dignity: "I like her as she is."

There could be no comparison between the Dauphine and her sister-in-law — a fresh source of envy, increased by the marked preference shown by the King to the pretty and graceful Dauphine.

With her natural warmth of feeling, aided by the politic advice of Mercy, Marie-Antoinette tried in every way to propitiate the Comtesse de Provence, and, though with some fluctuations due to ill-natured remarks from the "Mesdames," she succeeded in establishing friendly intercourse; but, from time to time, small incidents revealed a degree of duplicity on the part of both the Comte and Comtesse de Provence which especially shocked and chilled the open-hearted frankness of Marie-Antoinette.

On one of these occasions she ran to her husband and embraced him, saying earnestly: "I feel that I love you every day more and more. Your honesty and frankness charm me, and the more I compare you to others, the more I know how much greater your worth is than theirs."

This effusive speech, although so evidently sincere, did not suffice to give confidence to the too diffident

ANTOINE-PAUL-JACQUES DE QUELEN DE STUER DE CAUSSADE,
DUC DE LA VAUGUYON.

AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., N. Y., OF THE PAINTING BY MLLE. BRESSON.

Prince. Some time after this incident he suddenly asked his wife: "Do you really love me?" She earnestly replied: "Indeed I do, and every day I esteem you more highly."

He seemed happy on receiving this assurance, but his uncouth manners and awkward ways often irritated the Dauphine, who lost patience and reproved him sharply. He showed no anger at these remonstrances, but his eyes would fill with tears. When she saw this she embraced him, and her own tears would flow; but notwithstanding her efforts and his good intentions, the attempt to civilize the Dauphin seemed hopeless.

As a boy he had been neglected, and, with his very sensitive heart, the absence of all tenderness and affection around him had made him shrink within himself and become incapable of expressing what he well knew how to feel. After the death of his mother he had said mournfully: "Whom can I love now? No one loves me here!" He now loved his wife, but could hardly believe that she returned his affection.

The death of the Duc de la Vauguyon delivered Marie-Antoinette from an adversary, if not an enemy. Unhappily, the Duc d'Aiguillon, who had replaced Choiseul as prime minister, headed the anti-Austrian party, and was on terms of intimate friendship with Madame du Barry. This was enough to cause intense dislike on the part of Marie-Antoinette, which she showed with her characteristic but impolitic frankness. In vain her wary mother and Mercy

remonstrated, both understanding only too well that she was wilfully creating a dangerous enemy. She could not understand how advisers whom she respected could exhort her to feign what she did not feel. But meanwhile the Comte de Provence and his wife, the latter guided by her cautious husband, did all that the Dauphine did not do, and ingratiated themselves with those whom she haughtily disdained.

The marriage of the Comte d'Artois to the sister of the Comtesse de Provence soon followed, attended by the usual intrigues. The Princess was not endowed with more beauty or grace than her sister, though with a better complexion,—her only superiority. But she was less intelligent and more disagreeable in manner. The sisters had never been on very affectionate terms in their father's palace, and they now agreed only in their immensely high opinion of the merits of the house of Savoy, to which they belonged, and in jealousy of the superior rank and greater personal attractions of the Dauphine, to whom they unwillingly yielded the precedence which was her due. "If I am not to be a queen, I am of the stuff of which queens are made," the Comtesse de Provence remarked haughtily; and at a later period, when Marie-Antoinette had become Queen of France, the Comte d'Artois one day found his sisters-in-law in sharp discussion beyond what the respect required by etiquette could allow. The Queen, with heightened color, turned to him: "*Mon frère*, here is Madame, who maintains that

the house of Savoy holds the first rank among royal families. Now every one knows that the house of Austria is the highest of all."

"Madame," quickly replied the French prince, "I know nothing of the kind. I thought you were speaking seriously; but as I see now that you must be in jest, nothing more need be said on the subject."

Marie-Antoinette felt the lesson conveyed, and said no more; but from the first arrival of the Piedmontese princesses, the daughter of the German Cæsars could not maintain her position without incessant struggles. In her dislike for court trammels, she had gladly allowed Madame Adelaide to continue to preside over the official circle in the evenings, which was her own prerogative as future queen; but Mercy now insisted upon her right being immediately claimed, lest it should be usurped by the Comtesse de Provence, who would thus be placed in a superior position.

"Trifles light as air" caused incessant squabbles, notwithstanding the amiable efforts of Marie-Antoinette to promote peace and affectionate intimacy with her sisters-in-law. The aunts interfered, taking part now with one, now with another, but more frequently blaming Marie-Antoinette.

The state visit of the Dauphin and Dauphine to Paris, which ought to have taken place on their marriage, but which had been constantly deferred, was at last granted by Louis XV. The Dauphine

won all hearts by her grace and charm of manner; even the Dauphin sufficiently conquered his habitual shyness to produce a favorable impression; and when they both appeared on that balcony of the palace of the Tuileries[1] where so many princesses have been presented to the population of Paris, the enthusiasm with which the Dauphine was greeted knew no bounds.

Marie-Antoinette, describing the scene to her mother, the Empress, exclaims: "How happy we should feel in our state, on winning so easily the love of a whole nation! And yet nothing is so precious. I felt this deeply, and shall never forget it."

Alas! the love of a nation is fickle, and Marie-Antoinette was destined to learn its insecurity!

The Empress continued her exhortations and reprimands, without ever provoking rebellion on the part of her really remarkably submissive daughter, who tried to improve, renewed her resolutions, and, though with fluctuations, read more regularly with the Abbé de Vermond, studied music, and made considerable progress, especially on the harp, which she particularly liked. She also danced very gracefully and well. The poor Dauphin took lessons with her, but with his ungainly figure and heavy steps never reached the desired result. The Empress complained of her daughter's letters as too laconic and cold; but when exhorted by Mercy on the subject of showing affection to her mother, poor Marie-Antoi-

[1] The last royal bride who appeared there was the Empress Eugénie.

nette replied: "I love the Empress, but I fear her, even at a distance. When I write I never feel at ease with her."

To this Maria Theresa replies: "Do not say that I scold, that I preach, but say: 'Mama loves me, and has constantly my advantage in view; I must believe her and comfort her by following her good advice.' You will find the benefit of this, and there will then be no further shadow between us. I am sincere, and I exact great sincerity and candor toward myself."

But in writing to Mercy the Empress speaks severely of Marie-Antoinette. "Notwithstanding all your care and discernment in directing my daughter, I see only too clearly how unwilling are her efforts to follow your advice and mine. In these days only flattery and a playful tone are liked; and when, with the best intentions, we address any serious remonstrance, our young people are wearied, consider that they are scolded, and, as they always suppose, without reason. I see that this is my daughter's case. I shall, nevertheless, continue to warn her when you see that it may be useful to do so, adding some amount of flattery, much as I dislike that style." She adds that she has not much hope of success in conquering her daughter's "indolence."

Notwithstanding her mother's asperity, Marie-Antoinette really loved her; if she knew that the Empress was either ill in health or unhappy, she wept bitterly and seemed miserable. With regard to the

vexed question of the readings with the Abbé, the few books whose titles are quoted are so uninteresting and of such poor literature that her dislike to them cannot cause surprise. The poor good man had really no idea of choosing books that could interest a young girl or develop her mind.

The enthusiastic reception which the young couple had met from the Parisians led them to return to Paris and appear at the opera and theaters, where they were always well received. But the young members of the royal family, encouraged by the free use of these pleasures, took a strong fancy to see the public masked ball at the Opéra. Every precaution being taken as to the manner in which they were surrounded, so as to obviate the evident drawbacks to such an amusement, the King consented to the freak, which was much enjoyed. Unfortunately, this was the beginning of the excessive liking shown at a later period by Marie-Antoinette for such objectionable diversions.

Theatricals also became a passion. The young princes and princesses got up charades and even plays in their private apartments, with only the Dauphin as spectator, and so far there was no harm. The Dauphin, seeing how much all this was enjoyed, established a small theater in his apartments, where short, amusing plays were performed by professional actors; these, too, were received with delight. Everything that could isolate them from the solemn pleasures of the court was welcome to all the young

people. There were, however, balls given in the palace which the Dauphine liked sufficiently to remain till six o'clock in the morning; she then heard mass, and went to bed till two o'clock in the afternoon. On such occasions it may be supposed that the literary interviews with the Abbé were omitted.

The pleasures which they shared with the King, even when comparatively harmless, had other serious drawbacks. In one evening, at the King's play of lansquenet, the Dauphine won twelve hundred louis.[1] Much annoyed at her success, she tried to lose the sum again; finally, at the end of the game, she retained a profit of seven hundred louis. The next morning she sent fifty louis to each of the two principal parishes of Versailles for the poor, and consulted Mercy as to the disposal of the remainder, declaring that she would keep nothing for herself. Mercy advised her to divide the sum between her servants, who had now remained a year and a half without receiving their wages; this the Dauphine effected immediately, which caused general satisfaction. Mercy notes that she was not naturally generous, and that when gifts were received from her they had been extorted by importunity which she could not resist; but in general she did not spontaneously show even sufficient liberality for the requirements of her high position.

Time went by, gradually developing the peculiari-

1 The louis was then worth nearly twenty-five francs (between four and five dollars).

ties of each member of the royal family. The young Dauphine, surrounded by jealous intrigues and cabals incessantly renewed, sought relief from troublesome cares in constant amusement; but she remained amiable and kind to all through every provocation, always trying to conciliate and to make peace, but often exaggerating sincerity, and imprudent in her confidence. The Dauphin, honest, honorable, straightforward, but blunt and rough in manner, had an amount of physical strength which he needed to expend, and consequently indulged in violent exercise, and even manual labor, to the great annoyance of the Dauphine. He liked to make incessant changes in his apartments, and worked himself with the men employed at their various trades, recklessly soiling his hands and his clothes in very unroyal fashion, to the astonishment and consternation of the courtiers around him. The Comte and Comtesse de Provence, cautious and prudent, but often treacherous, constantly tried to make mischief out of some incautious word or unguarded act of the Dauphine, but preserved smooth appearances. The Comte d'Artois, now emancipated from the restraint of his tutors, showed the worst possible tendencies, with an amount of insubordination and rudeness that even the patient Dauphin was forced to repress; the Comtesse d'Artois, while less treacherous than her sister, was openly disagreeable, jealous, and ill-tempered.

The "Mesdames," who might have played a judicious and pacifying part in all these minute squab-

MARIE-LOUISE-THÉRÈSE-VICTOIRE DE FRANCE.

AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., N. Y., OF THE PAINTING BY JEAN-MARC NATTIER, IN MUSEUM OF VERSAILLES.

bles, made matters worse by listening to all the gossip retailed by their attendants, and showing their preferences according to the impressions received.

The King seemed more apathetic than ever, but gloomy, and as if beset by dark forebodings. His day was at hand, and he appeared to foresee the coming doom.

On April 28, 1774, Louis XV felt the first symptoms of illness while at Trianon, his favorite summer palace adjoining Versailles, to which he returned immediately. During the night of the 29th, the characteristic eruption of smallpox appeared, in its worst form.

With admirable devotedness, the King's daughters came to his bedside, notwithstanding the dreadful danger of contagion, and remained there day and night till his death. Marie-Antoinette had asked admittance to his room, but, for very evident reasons, neither the heir apparent nor his wife were allowed to breathe an atmosphere so dangerous that more than fifty persons took the smallpox, merely from having crossed the gallery before the door of the King's room, and several died. Monsieur de Létorières took the disease fatally, merely through having opened the door to look at the King for two minutes.

Regardless of danger, the Archbishop of Paris came to Versailles, and in order to be ready in the case of any emergency, he took up his residence at the house of the Lazarist fathers. He was anxious to secure the means of repentance and a Christian

death to the wretched sinner, but, at the same time, he declared that he would not allow the last sacraments of the church to be administered to the dying man, unless Madame du Barry were previously dismissed from the palace. Enraged at this, her friends and supporters, headed by the Duc d'Aiguillon, tried to conceal from the King the real nature of his malady and the danger of his position. Happily, notwithstanding all his vices, the King had preserved religious faith and fear of death and judgment. One of his physicians, probably influenced by the King's religious and devoted daughters, admitted the truth, which the King anxiously suspected, and a priest[1] was demanded, imperiously, by the sick man, at three o'clock in the morning of the 7th of May. He had several interviews with the King, who had previously (on the 4th of May) allowed Madame du Barry to be removed, the Duchesse d'Aiguillon taking her in her own carriage to a country house belonging to the Duc d'Aiguillon. There was consequently no further obstacle to the administration of the last rites of the church, which were given to the King in the presence of the Archbishop of Paris, who had drawn up a declaration, which was read aloud previously, in the name of the King, expressing his sorrow and repentance for the scandal of his life, and his resolution of amendment if it were spared. The King, who seemed deeply impressed,

[1] The Abbé Maudoux, confessor of Marie-Antoinette, by whom he was highly appreciated.

then said aloud, "Repeat that," which was done before all present. After this public retraction of his error, the last rites of the church were then administered to the dying King, who received also the viaticum. Shortly afterward his condition became more alarming, and it was evident that the end was at hand. After an interval of violent delirium he recovered consciousness, which he retained to the last, showing feelings of repentance.

The courtiers crowded in the large room called "Salle de l'Œil de Bœuf," where they habitually awaited the King's pleasure. It was so called from a large window, of bull's-eye shape, which distinguished this room from the others. The carriages were in readiness to take the royal family to Choisy; a lighted candle placed in the window of the King's apartment was to be extinguished as the signal for departure, which the fear of contagion, in addition to other considerations, caused to be impatiently expected.

It was a maxim of old French law that "the King never dies." Consequently, when the head physician solemnly announced, "Gentlemen, the King is dead!" the response of all present, in accordance with time-honored custom, was: "Long live the King!" ("Vive le roi!")

The candle was extinguished; the great clock was stopped at the fatal hour — 3 P. M.

It was the 10th of May, 1774. The rush of the courtiers, with a noise like thunder, as they hastened

to pay homage to the new sovereign, was the first announcement of the great event to the young heir and his wife.

Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette burst into tears, and with a joint impulse fell on their knees, exclaiming: "God help us and protect us! We are too young to reign!" The King was not yet twenty; the Queen was in her nineteenth year.

Madame de Noailles came into the room where they had remained together in seclusion and anxious expectancy, and, addressing them by their new titles, begged them to receive the dignitaries who had come to pay homage to the King and Queen.

The Queen appeared leaning on the King's arm; weeping bitterly, she received the first visits of the royal family and the principal officials; but the physicians urged the necessity of immediate departure. The carriages were ready, and the whole court set off for Choisy, leaving the wretched remains of the late sovereign to the care of servants and workmen, who wrapped the corpse in a sheet and hastily placed it in a coffin, where the physicians had ordered that spirits of wine should be poured. When the Duc de Villequier, first gentleman in waiting, left the late King's room immediately after his death, he reminded the first surgeon that his duty obliged him to open the body and embalm it. Under the circumstances, this would have entailed certain death. "I am ready," replied the surgeon; "but, while I operate, you must hold the head; it is the duty of your post."

The duke said no more, and left the room hastily; the corpse was not embalmed. The unfortunate workman who soldered the lead coffin died within twenty-four hours.

The corpse was taken to St. Denis, the burial-place of the kings of France, during the following night, with a military escort, followed by the execration of the populace loudly expressed on the way. At St. Denis it was considered necessary to wall up the coffin; for, notwithstanding all the precautions taken, the emanations were so dreadful, that danger was feared.

The scandalous reign of Louis XV was ended; a new reign was beginning.

"Le roi est mort!"

"Vive le roi!"

CHAPTER IV

The young King and Queen — Marie-Antoinette receives in state the great ladies of the land — Difficulties in obtaining due respect from the King's brothers and their wives — Too much kindness and indulgence — The Queen prepares private apartments as a refuge from too much splendor — Her daily life — The beauty and grace of the Queen — Etiquette and customs — Trianon and its improvements — The Queen's dairy — The Queen's extravagant fashions — Tastes of the King — His love of hunting — Dangerous influence of the Comte d'Artois — Public criticism.

A NEW reign was beginning, and never, perhaps, with more hopes or more general expectations of coming prosperity.

The nation was so weary of the vices of Louis XV, so irritated by the shameless extravagance for which they were crushed with taxes and reduced to grinding poverty, that anything new and wholly different from the past was hailed with enthusiastic anticipations — in fact, so excessive that they could only prove delusive.

The young King was known to have led hitherto an irreproachable life, and to profess the best moral and religious principles. Instead of the abandoned women who had disgraced the court of his predecessor, there was now a young and innocent Queen,

of whom little was known, but much was expected, without remembering sufficiently her youth and inexperience.

Meanwhile, Madame Adelaide, always ambitious and domineering, was striving to establish her influence over the King, and began by obtaining from his too yielding temper the nomination as prime minister of her particular protégé, the Comte de Maurepas—a choice blamed by all writers on the plea of the incapacity and frivolity of the man who would now in fact govern France.

Alarmed by this first success of Madame Adelaide, Mercy expatiated on the absolute necessity of the direct interference of Marie-Antoinette to prevent the King from being governed by others, as he would certainly be. But the young Queen knew nothing of political questions, and cared still less for such matters, which she thought insufferably wearisome; while even the grave Maria Theresa had misgivings as to the propriety of inducing one so young to play a part the danger of which her own sagacity foresaw.

The illness of the three "Mesdames," who had all caught the smallpox while attending their father so devotedly, pacified Mercy for the time, as the young royal family were required to leave Choisy immediately, for fear of infection. The court removed to the small château of "La Muette," near Paris,[1] and here Marie-Antoinette received in state all the ladies

1 "La Muette" is still to be seen at Passy, but the grounds have been much injured by the passage of the Belt Railway.

of the high nobility, who, young and old, came in deep mourning to pay homage to the new Queen.

The occasion was one of great solemnity, and Marie-Antoinette, surrounded by her ladies in waiting, all in sable attire, stood prepared to go through the ordeal with due gravity. Unfortunately, the habits of familiarity against which her mother had so often warned her, but which her easy good-nature had nevertheless tolerated far too much, induced one of her ladies,— the Comtesse de Clermont-Tonnerre,—who was tired of standing behind the Queen, to sit down on the floor, concealed by the hoops of the other ladies, and to play the most ridiculous and improper tricks during the solemn obeisances of the dignified old dowagers who passed in turn before her Majesty. The contrast between this childish nonsense and the lugubrious solemnity of the scene diverted the Queen, so that instead of at once stopping what was so obviously improper on such an occasion, she laughed several times behind her fan, hastily put up by way of an inadequate attempt at concealment.

The astonishment and anger of the ladies received may be imagined, and were certainly not unnatural under the circumstances. All left the palace with displeasure, and soon it was reported, even in the distant provinces, where the story became a matter of tradition, that on her first solemn reception of the noble ladies of the land the Queen had burst out laughing in their faces! Nothing is a trifle at a

MARIE-ADELAIDE DE FRANCE.

AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., N. Y., OF A PAINTING BY JEAN-MARC NATTIER, IN MUSEUM OF VERSAILLES.

court, and this small incident considerably chilled the first enthusiasm with which the new reign had been welcomed.

The new King had banished Madame du Barry from the court and sent her to a convent, where she remained for some time. When partly forgotten she was mercifully reinstated in her pretty house at Louveciennes, given to her by the late King, and was also sufficiently provided for. Marie-Antoinette, who at first had written harshly of "that creature," nevertheless contributed to these more indulgent decisions; and to the credit of Madame du Barry be it said that she showed the deepest gratitude, expressed most humbly. When evil days came she wrote to the Queen offering her all she possessed in such terms that Marie-Antoinette was much moved, although she did not accept the offer.[1]

The royal couple visited in turn the palaces of Marly, Compiègne, and Fontainebleau. At Marly the King decided on being inoculated with his brothers, as a preservative against smallpox. This resolution caused considerable alarm, inoculation being still a novelty in France; happily, success was complete, and all anxiety was quickly dispelled.

Louis XVI was not devoid of the sentimental tendencies of the period, notwithstanding his rough

[1] Madame du Barry was guillotined during the Revolution; and it was noted that she was the only woman who wept and begged for mercy on the scaffold. Her screams and entreaties were so dreadful that even the populace was moved; but she was forced on the plank while still imploring "one minute more."

manners and unromantic exterior. He began by declaring that the title of "brother" was what he valued most; that his brothers and sisters were not to use the word "Majesty" in addressing him, but that he was to be called "Mon frère." The Queen, according to etiquette, addressed him as "Monsieur." He soon discovered, however, that the princes were only too much disposed to assume equality, and that in the case of the Comte d'Artois especially it would not be easy to enforce due respect. The Queen also found that her sisters-in-law neglected to pay court to her at the usual hours, and that her carelessness in claiming the privileges of her rank caused omission of proper deference. Naturally haughty, the Queen felt sharply any intentional slight, and showed her displeasure by increase of pride in her demeanor, which was resented by the princesses. A further degree of coolness was provoked by the King's discovery of the double-dealing of the Comte and Comtesse de Provence, revealed by their letters found among the papers of the late King. There was consequently some amount of unpleasant feeling in the royal family at the time of the general return to Versailles in September, which marked the beginning of the purely official position and duties of each.

The King occupied the apartments of his predecessor; the Queen retained her own, but caused several back rooms to be prepared for her private use, as a relief from the inconvenient splendor of the

state apartments, too large and lofty for comfort. These reserved rooms, which are still shown, look on a dark and dreary inner court; certainly, in modern times few private gentlewomen would be satisfied with such a retreat. But they were more homelike and seemed more her own property than the royal abode devoted to the queens of France, where she was subjected to all the inconveniences attending a too exalted position. Marie-Antoinette had these inner rooms comfortably furnished in white silk brocaded with colored flowers. Here she placed her harp, her embroidery frame, her harpsichord, and her work-table; and here she received her favorite courtiers. The mornings, however, were spent in the Queen's official bedchamber, and devoted to all the obligations of etiquette.

The King rose early, and at the appointed hour the lady of the bedchamber in waiting watched his departure, to bolt the door after his exit till the time came to awaken the Queen. In the bedchamber the door may still be seen leading to a dark passage, lighted by lamps night and day, through which the King could go privately to his own apartments. The Queen was usually awakened at eight o'clock; the lady in waiting then presented to her a book containing patterns of all her dresses, with a small portion of the trimmings annexed, and a pincushion, from which the Queen took pins to mark the dresses chosen for the day—the full court dress, worn at the daily mass, always attended in ceremony; the after-

noon deshabillé for her private apartments; and the evening dress. The Queen had twelve of each kind for each season, summer and winter; those of muslin and lawn, afterward adopted, did not figure in the official list. What had been worn on the previous day was gathered up in silk wrappers and taken to the wardrobe department, from which all that the Queen had chosen for the day was brought in the same fashion, with the linen required, called the *prêt* (literally, "in readiness"). An extra provision of linen, called *en cas*, was also brought separately, "in case" the Queen should wish for a change during the day. The term *en cas* was also given to a basket of refreshments brought every evening, "in case" nourishment should be required during the night. This basket contained a bowl of broth, a cold roast chicken, etc., with bottles of wine, orgeat, and lemonade. The clothes which had been removed to the wardrobe department were laid on long tables, where they were pulled out, carefully wiped, and folded before being put away in the large wardrobes.

When these important matters had been settled the Queen rose and proceeded to perform her toilet; on bath days, which occurred several times a week, the bath was usually wheeled into the room, with all that was required, and followed by two bathing-women who attended the Queen. She wore a flannel bathing-gown, and usually breakfasted in the bath, the tray being placed on the cover. When she did not bathe she either breakfasted in bed or even

standing after she had risen. She usually took coffee, and sometimes chocolate, with a particular kind of roll to which she had been accustomed in Vienna. Marie-Antoinette seemed to care for no particular food except her morning coffee and her favorite rolls. When the Queen had taken her bath she was wrapped in a white silk mantle over a long night-dress, and returned to her bed, which had been previously warmed; then, taking her tapestry work, she received what was called *les petites entrées*, or the officials who had the privilege of being admitted at that time, such as her physicians and those attached to the King's person, her reader (the Abbé de Vermond), her private secretary, some of the King's attendants, etc. Often ten or twelve courtiers were together in the room during these morning interviews.

At noon occurred the official toilet, when the dressing-table was drawn into the middle of the room and the princesses with other privileged ladies were admitted.[1] The lady of the highest rank present had the right of dressing the Queen. The story is well known of her being obliged to stand shivering with cold in scanty raiment on a winter morning while her most necessary clothing was handed with due ceremonial from one princess to another as they came in succession, each one being of higher rank than her predecessor!

When dressed and seated at her dressing-table,

[1] This was called *les grandes entrées*.

while the last touches were given to her toilet, the gentlemen were admitted; and at the beginning of every month the money of her privy purse was placed on her dressing-table in gold pieces deposited in a white kid bag embroidered with gold. The Queen said a few gracious words to the courtiers whom she wished to honor; but soon the hour of the King's mass summoned her, and stepping into the center of the room, the suite took their places around her as in state she crossed the adjoining "Salon de la Paix" and the long "Galerie des Glaces," where she met the King leaving his apartments with the same ceremony. In those days, when monarchs had not learned to live in perpetual dread of assassination, any well-dressed people were admitted into the palace, and could stand in the "Galerie des Glaces" while the royal family passed through on their way to the chapel where mass in music was sung every day. The Queen on these occasions looked, according to the mythological language of the time, "like a goddess among her nymphs," as with the peculiar grace which marked her every motion she glided through the long gallery, an ideal of royal beauty, as all her contemporaries have borne witness. The little school-girl who four years before had appeared as a mere child in the court ceremonies had now grown into a majestic and beautiful woman, above the ordinary height of her French ladies, and magnificently proportioned. Her features had not the classic perfection which

afterward characterized the beauty of the Empress Eugénie: the face was too narrow for regularity; the nose, although slender and delicately formed, was too marked and too aquiline; the Austrian pouting underlip was too developed. But these slight defects were forgotten in the brilliancy of her whole appearance: her exquisite complexion, which was disfigured rather than heightened by the circular patch of rouge which etiquette prescribed as an indispensable part of the court dress; her golden hair, of a soft, pale shade, which could be discerned through the powder so universally worn at that time; her bright and gracious smile, which lighted up the dignified face, so queenlike in its sweetness. The lines of her graceful neck as it rose from her shoulders, the turn of her head, her whole attitude—all were indescribably royal and peculiar to herself; no other French queen is quoted as possessing the same characteristics to the same degree, and no other woman could captivate attention in the presence of Marie-Antoinette.

But alas for the King! What a disappointment when his subjects saw for the first time a sovereign of absolutely plebeian aspect, with the rough hands of a mechanic, a shambling gait, disordered hair, which no hairdresser could manage to keep in presentable condition, a loud, coarse laugh, a harsh and unmusical voice! No greater contrast could be imagined than what was seen in the husband and wife.

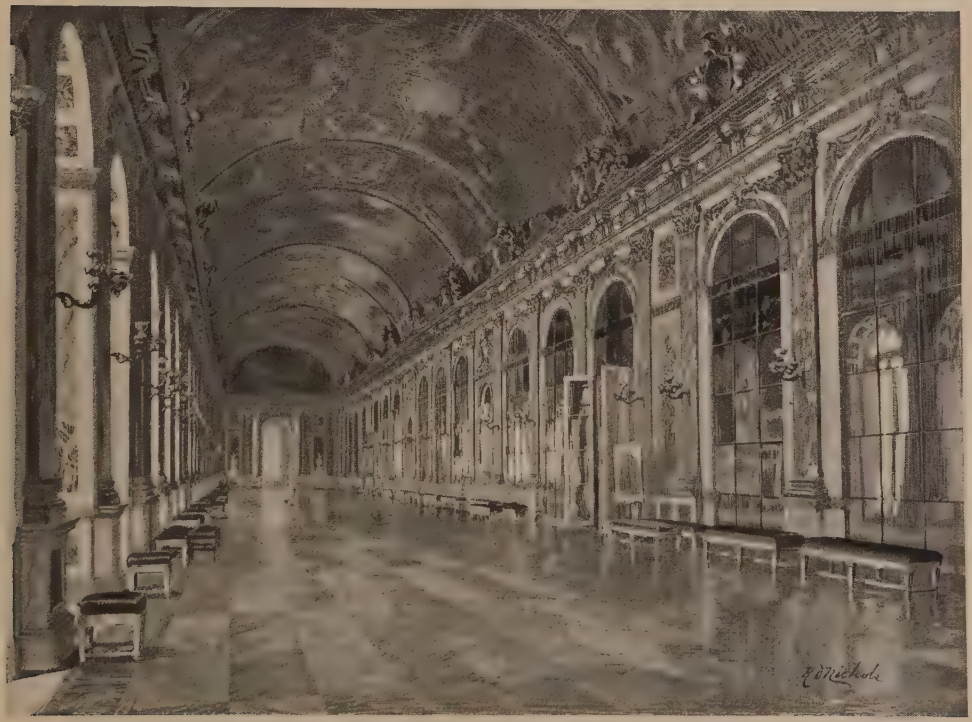
The King and Queen passed down the gallery between the rows of spectators, stopping here and

there to say a word to those known or presented to them, and then heard mass in the chapel. After mass they dined together; the Queen hated the public dinner, and insisted upon the latter ordeal being limited to Sundays, when she only appeared at the dinner-table, and afterward dined quietly in her private apartments. The King ate voraciously on all occasions; the Queen had a small appetite, and was utterly indifferent to her fare, generally taking only a small share of roast or boiled chicken, and plain biscuits for sweets. She drank only water, and that of Versailles being of bad quality, a supply was brought daily for her use from a spring at Ville d'Avray, which was reputed to be the best in the neighborhood.

After dinner the Queen retired to her own apartments, where she took off her hoop and heavy court dress, which she exchanged for more convenient attire—Sundays excepted, for she then attended vespers in the afternoon with the same state as for the mass.

On her return, she received the ladies presented on their marriage, who were required by etiquette to bend down so low in their obeisance as to kiss the edge of her dress; but this latter homage she always gracefully prevented by a motion of her fan.

On other days, when she did not follow the King's hunt, which took place three times a week, she generally remained in her private rooms, where she received a certain number of privileged friends, of



SALLE DES GLACES, PALACE OF VERSAILLES.

whom her attendant ladies had a list. She played on the harp or the pianoforte; sometimes the Abbé de Vermond induced her to listen to what he called "reasonable reading," which she heartily disliked and usually rejected after her new dignity had given her increased authority to choose her employments. She never reached real proficiency on any instrument, but played easily at sight, and liked to read music. Her favorite recreation, however, was chatting with her visitors, always on trifling subjects, in which mere gossip had a large share. Mercy and the Abbé de Vermond both lament over the frivolity of her life, and the continual waste of time in which she indulged, but it was now useless to remonstrate. In the evening, after dressing for the occasion, came the court circle, the card-playing, which afterward assumed great importance, and the supper, where the Queen showed the same indifference as at dinner. She usually took broth, the wing of a chicken, and some trifling small cake.

On the days when, after hunting, the King took supper at the lodge of Saint-Hubert, the Queen was present—an innovation suggested by Mercy. Previously etiquette restricted the Queen and the princesses from admitting men to their table; this had caused great mischief during the reign of Louis XV, by inducing considerable license which the presence of royal ladies restrained.

The Queen found no enjoyment in the walks and drives which she could take in the park of Ver-

sailles, with its terraces and parterres open to the burning sun, and its long, formal avenues, shady, but monotonous. The country outside was still less agreeable, for etiquette required that the royal carriages should go at full gallop over paved roads, and necessarily in a cloud of dust. Marie-Antoinette longed for a small house of her own, where she could enjoy the liberty of a private individual in gardens of her own arrangement, and go about freely without the necessity of being followed wherever she went by two ladies in full court dress.

In the outskirts of the park of Versailles was a small palace called "Trianon," built by Louis XIV for summer relaxation. Adjoining this was an unpretending villa, which in modern days would be considered insufficient for the needs of a wealthy private gentleman, but which Louis XV had begun to build for the use of Madame de Pompadour, who died before it was completed. Finally, under the name of "Le Petit Trianon," it was finished for Madame du Barry. Here Louis XV held festivities and suppers, where, as Mercy would have said "the rules of propriety were not scrupulously observed." Even the servants were not admitted; a table already prepared rose through an opening in the floor, the traces of which can still be seen. As may be supposed, "Le Petit Trianon" was not in good repute, and it is perhaps worthy of regret that Louis XVI should have given it as a toy to the Queen, enabling her thus to satisfy her wish for "a house of her own"

—the bad doings of Trianon seeming to cast their shadow over her by associating her name with scandalous remembrances. But this objection did not seem to strike any of those concerned, and Marie-Antoinette with great delight proceeded to prepare the "Petit Trianon" for her own use, and to lay out the gardens surrounding it according to her own fancy. The little paradise that she thus created has been carefully preserved to this day, and the memory of the unfortunate Queen seems inseparable from the place which she loved so much.

Louis XV had left the finances of the state in a woeful condition, and the ministers urged the absolute necessity of strict economy, with reforms in the abuses of the court. But neither Louis XVI nor Marie-Antoinette had any idea of the value of money or of the meaning of the word "economy." They had never managed their own affairs nor been initiated in those of the state, of which Louis XVI had about as clear an idea as might be attributed to the sons of the Great Mogul. The households of the princes and princesses were absurdly numerous, and in every respect it was desirable that they should be reduced; but any attempt at reform caused a general outcry and protestations from those concerned, which the good-natured and timorous King could not resist. He could not bear the thought that under his reign people should be less favored than under that of his grandfather, and be obliged to give up what they had hitherto enjoyed.

Marie-Antoinette began the improvements at Trianon as if she had the purse of a fairy-tale at her disposal. Although there was nothing particularly luxurious, yet everything was to be so completely altered that great expense was unavoidable. She wished for what was called an "English" garden, — in fact, an inclosed piece of landscape, — and the straight walks, the flat ground of the primitive gardens, must be entirely changed. An artificial lake was created, in which she was to have the enjoyment of fishing; she had beautiful undulating lawns, rare shrubs and trees, a rivulet, an island, and rustic bridges leading to temples. The works of Florian and especially those of Rousseau had induced a sentimental passion for what was supposed to be country life — the sort of country life where lambs are as well washed as lap-dogs, and dairies have white marble tables and china bowls. Such was the dairy of Marie-Antoinette, which is still shown to visitors. Here she helped to churn butter and to make cheese; cows were milked in her presence, and she drank the new milk with delight. It is gravely stated by writers of the time that during the visit to Choisy after the death of the late King, the "sensibility" of the good-natured but heavy Louis XVI had been "greatly moved" by seeing the Queen and princesses eating strawberries and cream under the green trees! This instance of "sensibility" on the part of one whose obtuse nature had at least the merit of plain common-sense gives some idea of the sentimental nonsense which char-

acterized the period, and by which poor Marie-Antoinette was so much influenced. But to procure all these country pleasures satisfactorily, she must have a farm, to which she added a mill that worked in earnest; and the delight of seeing the wheel go round may be imagined. Then, to complete rustic delusions, she built a Swiss village, with the house of the lord of the manor, of the *bailli*, the curé, etc., twelve in all. Some guide-books assert that these houses were inhabited by real peasantry whom the Queen established there, but this is absolutely contradicted by trustworthy writers; with the exception of a gardener and a keeper, no one lived in these make-believe dwellings, which may still be seen near the lake of "Le Petit Trianon."

There were also a grotto lined with green moss, flowers in profusion, and walks bordered by rose-trees. When the improvements were finished, which required several years, the whole was indeed a triumph of prettiness — a toy, but the most attractive that could be imagined There is still about it something delightfully old-fashioned and quaint,— a French version of Goldsmith's poem,— which seems to recall the perfume found in some old eighteenth-century cabinet known to our childhood.

A weeping-willow by the lake was planted by Marie-Antoinette, whose memory haunts the place. Her last happy days were spent under the trees of Trianon, where at every turn the visitor almost ex-

pects to see the bright vision of a past which is there living still and apparently so real.

The house finished for Madame du Barry has too much that bears the stamp of what would be gladly forgotten, although Marie-Antoinette tried to transform it. The balustrade of the staircase bears her initials, but the first rooms on entering the house are decorated too suggestively with quivers, roses, and significant mythological emblems. The apartments especially used by Marie-Antoinette are adorned with wreaths and bouquets of wild flowers carved on the panels, separated by a device of lilies (the royal flower) woven with laurel. The woodwork was originally painted a soft sea-green, the flowers white and gold, relieved by hangings of a deep crimson bordered with gold. A few articles of furniture belonging to the period, some with the combined initials of Louis and Marie-Antoinette, have been placed in the rooms, which the Queen seems to have just left.

The bedchamber, which is small and unpretending, has a bed[1] richly embroidered in colored silks, out of which the crown, worked on the counterpane, was taken during the Revolution, leaving the marks of the stitches. In the time of Marie-Antoinette the window-curtains and other hangings were of muslin embroidered in colored silk.

Such was the tiny palace of Trianon, which had

[1] This bed was used by Marie-Antoinette, but not at Trianon, where the coverlet and curtains were of blue silk.

no excess of luxury in itself, but which was the cause of great expense at a time when every one felt the necessity of reforms and economy. The sums actually spent on Trianon and its gardens were spread over several years, and their amount has been greatly exaggerated, but the effect produced was unfavorable, and criticisms began to be murmured. Moreover, Marie-Antoinette, who had been "badly dressed" as Dauphine, was now determined to be well dressed as Queen, and to follow in this respect her own fancies. The Duchesse de Chartres had, unfortunately, introduced to her notice a celebrated milliner of the time, called Mlle. Bertin. Hitherto queens of France had never been in direct communication with their tradespeople; but Marie-Antoinette would allow no one to come between herself and Mlle. Bertin, who became her favorite counselor as regards matters of dress and fashion. Of course the milliner took advantage of her position to favor her own private interests, with the consequence of leading the young Queen into exaggeration and extravagance in following what was called "la mode." Hours were spent in these important discussions with Mlle. Bertin, whom she freely admitted to her private apartments. The Empress, her mother, much displeased at all she heard, vainly tried to remonstrate, saying that the public papers were full of particulars on the extravagant height of her head-dresses and the excess with which she followed exaggerated fashions. The

young Queen carelessly answered that nothing of all this seemed extraordinary in France; that every one wore what her mother criticized, and was quite accustomed to such fashions. It was only too true, unfortunately, that her example was followed by the young women of the day, who were thus led into excessive expenses, as her mother foresaw. The Queen was held responsible by public opinion, and incurred considerable blame in consequence.

The tastes of the King were quite opposed to those of the Queen, although he was always indulgent and kind in tolerating — nay, even encouraging — her fancies. His own were limited to what enabled him to expend his superabundant physical energy in violent exercise. He established a forge on the top floor of the palace, where he worked lustily with a locksmith,[1] who taught him his trade, and treated him as roughly as he would have done in the case of an ordinary apprentice. When sufficiently tired of this hard manual labor, he went out by a trap-door on the flat roof of the palace, where his delight was to walk about among the chimney-pots, and where he had established a telescope which enabled him to watch all that went on in the courtyards and avenues leading to his royal residence. When he met with masons or plasterers doing repairs he turned up his sleeves and worked heartily with them, to the great injury of his clothes

[1] This man, named Gamain, afterward became a revolutionist, and betrayed the King's confidence in the most unworthy manner.

THE TEMPLE OF LOVE, VERSAILLES.

THE DAIRY AND TOWER OF MARLBOROUGH, VERSAILLES.

and hands, whose condition often irritated the refined, delicate Queen beyond control. When he returned to his private apartments he was not averse to quiet and serious occupation; he liked to read historical works, travels, everything relating to geography, and was fond of preparing maps. In one of the rooms belonging to his apartments a brass line, crossing the floor diagonally, represents the meridian of Paris, and was laid down under the direction of Louis XVI, and according to his calculation. Two or three times a week he went hunting, a taste which in his case amounted to a passion, and was gratified by tearing over the country at reckless speed, without caring for danger. Sometimes he returned for the usual supper at Versailles; when the hunt was prolonged he went to Saint-Hubert, where the Queen often followed him. Being tired and hungry, he fully satisfied his hearty appetite, and then fell asleep in the carriage which took him back to his royal home. When he alighted on reaching the palace, being still half asleep, he staggered, and his attendants were obliged to assist him as he went up-stairs, with the result of causing rumors that he came back in a state of intoxication. This supposition seems to have been wholly undeserved in his case, but the guards and servants who remembered the excesses of the late King were not unnaturally inclined to such suspicions.

The King hated late hours and worldly dissipation, of which the Queen never seemed to have

enough. A continual whirl of amusements seemed necessary to prevent her from falling into melancholy and depression. She had an affectionate heart, and had tried sincerely to love the King. But at this time she could not do so; his coarse, plebeian nature, now so completely revealed, filled her with repulsion. His tastes, so different from hers, estranged him from her; they saw but little of each other, and he had never been demonstrative. She had nothing to fill her empty life, and her one aim seemed to be the banishment of all serious thought. Her sister-in-law, the Comtesse d'Artois, had hopes of maternity; she had not, and she had no interest capable of filling her heart or satisfying her mind. She vainly rushed from one amusement to another; notwithstanding the distance from Paris, and the severe winter weather, she continually went there to the opera and to theaters, of course returning at late hours. She had balls at Versailles, and especially favored those in which fancy dresses were introduced; preparing quadrilles in various costumes, with fancy dances, spending considerable time in superintending rehearsals, and settling all matters belonging to these festivities. The King made no objection, and was always willing to allow her to do as she pleased, provided he were not required to participate in such amusements. In accordance with this system, he made the fatal mistake of allowing her to attend the Opéra masked balls without a sufficient suite, and to go about far too

freely with the Comte d'Artois, whose habits were not such as to induce any confidence in his tact and discretion. The Queen drove alone with him in new-fashioned light carriages, which were considered of too masculine a stamp for court decorum, and which her easy thoughtlessness preferred to the ponderous vehicles hitherto used by royalty, with their necessary escort and attendants. The Opéra balls were, however, certainly the most objectionable among the Queen's fancies; for although frequented by the nobility of the time, and of a better stamp than the modern saturnalia known under that name, still, being public, the Queen was thrown into a medley crowd where she met people of the least respectable class, with whom she ought never to have been in contact. The Queen remained late, and the distance being considerable, she consequently did not reach Versailles till the early morning hours, while her husband and natural protector had been comfortably in bed and asleep since eleven of the preceding night. All this was more than frivolous, and should never have been permitted, as the Queen's reputation suffered in consequence. Not that she was ever led into any really wrong act, but she was nevertheless freely criticized as too light and inconsiderate for a queen of France.

Not unnaturally, her aunts, the "Mesdames," were shocked, and Madame Adelaide spoke seriously to the King on the subject of the Queen's imprudent follies. For this she really could not be blamed; but

as the King silenced her, and no improvement took place, the "Mesdames" expressed their feelings freely in their circle, which became a focus of opposition against the Queen, and of gossip which spread outside the court with the exaggeration usual in such cases.

CHAPTER V

The King's coronation — A painful crown — A royal brother — Blunders of an archduke — An imprudent correspondence — The Queen's likes and dislikes — Intimacy with the Princesse de Lamballe — The King's sledges — Danger in diamond bracelets — Reprimands and prophecies of Maria Theresa — Marriage of Madame Clotilde — The Queen described by Horace Walpole — Intimacy with the Princesse de Guéménée.

THE King's coronation, which took place at Rheims with all the medieval ceremonies, revived loyalty for a time; and the "sensibility" shown by the Queen, who was merely present without sharing the honors of the day, interested the spectators, and caused a revival of the enthusiasm shown in the first days of the new reign. When the "twelve peers" held the crown of Charlemagne above the head of the monarch, during a burst of appropriate music, till the archbishop who officiated took it and solemnly crowned him, the Queen was so completely overcome that she was obliged to leave her seat for a few minutes till she was able to recover her self-possession. In those days of fine feelings carried even to affectation, this natural betrayal of real emotion could not but be welcome; and when, after the ceremony, the King and Queen appeared together in public,

their reception by the people was as hearty as they could wish.

The superstitious had, however, remarked that when the crown was secured on his head Louis XVI said: "It is painful to me." It was indeed destined to become a crown of thorns! But Marie-Antoinette had no sad forebodings, and the glorious ceremony of the coronation left her only feelings of joyful triumph.

"What a day was that of the coronation!" she writes to her mother. "While I live I can never forget it."

The visit of her brother the Archduke Maximilian soon followed to diversify the monotonous though incessant pleasures of her life. He was accompanied by one of her mother's most trusted friends and counselors, the Comte de Rosenberg. Marie-Antoinette, delighted to see an old friend and to revive the recollections of her childhood, was, as usual, incautious and far too confiding in her intercourse with Rosenberg. On the other hand, she was anxious to receive her brother with due honor, and she could not but recognize how completely the young Prince made himself ridiculous in the sight of the Parisians, who are not indulgent in such cases. Among other instances of foolish speeches, it was related that when he visited the Jardin des Plantes, and Buffon presented him with a copy of his great work, the Archduke refused it, saying graciously that he would "be sorry to deprive him of it." The Queen felt such blunders keenly, but was only the more determined to

support her brother. The Archduke traveled *incog.* and consequently could not claim the honors due to his rank, yet he absolutely refused to visit the princes of the blood royal, and expected all deference from them, which they would not show unless the first act of courtesy came from the Austrian prince himself. The Queen took his part warmly, and spoke sharply to the French princes. "The King has treated the Archduke as a brother, and invited him to supper in his private apartments with the royal family — an honor to which I do not suppose that you would pretend. My brother will be sorry not to know the princes; but he is here for a short time, he has a great deal to see, and he must give up the prospect."

The princes would not yield, and did not attend the festivities in honor of the Archduke, which cost large sums,—more than a hundred thousand francs, but report said six hundred thousand,—which were considered to be wasted upon the Archduke, whom nobody liked. The princes of the blood were highly approved by public opinion for their resistance to Austrian pretensions. The Duc d'Orléans, the Prince de Condé, and the Prince de Conti, retired to their country houses, while their sons, more boldly, went about publicly in Paris by way of bravado during the festivities at Versailles, and were loudly cheered. All French sympathy was with the Bourbon princes against the silly, haughty Austrian who was, unfortunately, the Queen's brother.

The Queen herself was proudly imprudent in the speeches which she carelessly uttered without realizing the terrible importance of the impression produced. On one occasion, when Madame de Noailles was wearying her with some minute questions of etiquette, bringing forward the example of the late Queen, Marie-Antoinette answered impatiently: "Settle all that as you please, Madame; you really cannot expect that a queen of France, born an archduchess of Austria, should attach the same importance to minute details as a Polish princess who became a queen." Of course this imprudent speech was repeated, and the effect on the "Mesdames" of the carelessly contemptuous allusion to their mother may be imagined.

Marie-Antoinette was also reported to have said that there was no "real nobility" in France, meaning that they were not exempt from the stain of *mésalliance*, which, according to German theories, is sufficient to destroy a whole pedigree. But the great families of Montmorency, Rohan, Noailles, Bauffremont, and others, were not inclined to accept such a sweeping assertion, and considered that they were inferior to no nobility in Europe, while they deeply resented the opinion expressed by the young Queen—the "Austrian," as she was already termed—with considerable bitterness.

Marie-Antoinette was unfortunately both thoughtless and inconsiderate, often speaking at random and giving her confidence too easily. When her

brother Maximilian had returned to Vienna, she wrote to the Comte de Rosenberg with a degree of freedom which greatly displeased the Empress, her mother, to whom Rosenberg gave the letters to read. In one she says: "You know Paris and Versailles; you have seen and judged. If I required an apologist, I should trust to you for that. I would candidly acknowledge more than you say; for instance, my tastes are not the same as those of the King, who cares only for field sports and mechanics. You will acknowledge that I would have little grace near a forge; I could not play the part of Vulcan, and that of Venus might displease him much more than my tastes, which he does not disapprove."

The imprudent style of this letter requires no comment. But a second letter produced a still worse impression on the mind of her wise mother. The one idea of Marie-Antoinette, after the accession of her husband to the throne of France, had been the recall of Choiseul, to which the King would not consent. She, however, obtained leave for him to appear at the court; but he felt the insecurity of his position so completely that he had ordered post-horses to be in readiness to take him back to his country house of Chanteloup. The Queen received him most graciously, expressing her pleasure at his return, and her satisfaction at having contributed to it. The King only said roughly: "You have aged, Monsieur de Choiseul: you are stouter, and you have grown bald." In the circle of that evening the King

said significantly: "When people have pleasant country-houses of their own, the best thing they can do is to remain there." Choiseul took the hint, and returned to Chanteloup. The Queen tried in vain to reinstate him in his position as minister. The King, who was in one of what the courtiers called "his butting moods," said harshly: "I will hear no more about that man." Baffled on this point, Marie-Antoinette carried out her will, however, in getting rid of d'Aiguillon, who was banished to his country-seat; and at the coronation, where Choiseul must needs come to pay homage, she managed to have an interview with him, which she thus relates to Rosenberg:

"I am obliged to go back to the departure of Monsieur d'Aiguillon to give you a full account of my conduct. That departure was entirely my work. . . . I asked the King to send him away. True, I would not have a *lettre de cachet;* but he lost nothing by this, for instead of staying in Touraine, as he wished, he was requested to continue his journey as far as Aiguillon in Gascony.

"You have perhaps heard of the audience I gave to the Duc de Choiseul at Rheims. So much was said about it that I should not be surprised if old Maurepas had feared to have to take his rest in his own home. You will easily believe that I did not see him[1] without speaking about it to the King, but you will not guess the adroitness that I used so as not to seem to ask leave. I told him that I wished to see

[1] Choiseul.

Monsieur de Choiseul, and that I saw no difficulty except as to the choice of the day. I managed so well that the poor man[1] himself settled the most convenient time for me to see him. I think that I used sufficiently my rights as a wife on that occasion.

"At last we have got rid of Monsieur de la Vrillière.[2] Although he is hard of hearing, he nevertheless heard enough to understand that it was time to go, or the door would be shut in his face. Monsieur de Malesherbes will fill his place."

Maria Theresa was shocked at this letter, saying to Mercy: "It has gone to my very heart. My anxiety is fully justified. She is rushing to her ruin, and she may be considered as only too fortunate if, in her destruction, she preserves the virtues appertaining to her rank."

This judgment is characteristically severe. But when the fate of the unfortunate Marie-Antoinette is remembered, the prophecy becomes startling.

With so many amiable and lovable points in her character, an amount of levity which in private life would assume but small importance in the case of one so young was sufficient in her high position to surround her with enemies whom she despised,—fondly imagining that an "archduchess of Austria" was so far above their malevolence that she was beyond the reach of their intrigues,—and who yet succeeded far beyond their anticipations, and probably their intentions, in throwing her over the precipice

[1] The King. [2] One of the ministers.

toward which she blindly "rushed," as her mother said.

In almost every letter the prudent Empress warns her against interfering to procure favors and official posts for her particular protégés.

But Marie-Antoinette would not be schooled. She was good-natured and warm-hearted; she wished to please those whom she liked; and she did not realize that in favoring some she might be unjust to others. The Duc de Fitz-James was the father of the Princesse de Chimay, one of her ladies-in-waiting; and for this sole reason, without any particular merit of his own, she entreated the King to raise him to the supreme dignity of marshal of France. The King consented, but met with considerable opposition from the Minister of War, who objected strongly on the ground that several generals had higher claims. The King then withdrew his proposal; but he had given a promise to the Queen, and a great outcry was raised around her to oblige him to keep his word, the Duc de Fitz-James having fully expected his appointment. The King tried to satisfy all parties by naming six marshals besides the Duc de Fitz-James; but this lavishing of honors which ought to be bestowed sparingly made fresh mischief by casting ridicule on the whole. The seven marshals were called the "Seven Deadly Sins," while satirical verses and songs were handed about, in which the Queen was not spared.

Marie-Antoinette was equally vehement in her

likes and dislikes. One of her familiar courtiers, the Comte de Guines, who had been appointed ambassador to England, was accused of serious misdemeanor in having favored smuggling under cover of the embassy, and having speculated in the funds through abuse of state secrets. The facts were proved, and Monsieur de Guines, who tried to throw the blame on his secretary, was prosecuted and called to trial before the Parliament. The Queen took his part with great warmth, so that she looked upon his adversaries as if they were her own, and was supposed to have greatly influenced the verdict of acquittal which he finally obtained after legal discussions that were prolonged during several years. This again was much blamed in the general world, where the conclusion was drawn that the Queen's pleasure could influence the judges to the degree of injuring public justice.

Marie-Antoinette had become intimate with the Princesse de Lamballe, of the royal house of Savoy, who had been most unhappily married to the profligate son of the Duc de Penthièvre, father also of the Duchesse de Chartres, afterward Duchesse d'Orléans. The young Princesse de Lamballe soon lost her husband, which event no one could consider as a calamity, and remained a young widow in the house of her father-in-law, toward whom she played the part of a devoted daughter. The Princesse de Lamballe was extremely pretty; she had what is called a "sweet" face, without much intellect, but

gentle and interesting. Her sacrificed life and her painful position aroused all the Queen's sympathy, and for some time the Princesse held the position of favorite friend, being seen with the Queen wherever she went. The winter was severe, with abundant snow. Marie-Antoinette, delighted to recall the pastimes of her childish days at Vienna, had sledges prepared, in which she flew over the frosted ground with the Princesse, who, fair and fresh as a rose under her rich furs, looked like spring itself in midwinter. Of course every one tried to imitate the Queen, and the great ladies vied with each other in the painting and gilding with which the sledges were adorned. Louis XVI would not indulge in this new fancy; but, understanding the sufferings of the poor in such severe weather, he ordered carts of fuel to be distributed to those in need.

"Gentlemen, here are my sledges," he said gravely, addressing the courtiers, as he watched the line of carts passing before the palace.

Marie-Antoinette was equally kind-hearted and charitable, but less thoughtful when necessities were not brought in a direct manner to her notice. She was carried away by a whirl of incessant amusement, for which it must unhappily be acknowledged that she lavished money in such a manner that she had none left for the claims of charity.

Shortly after her accession to the throne a jeweler named Boehmer, who afterward played an important part in the lamentable intrigue known as that of

the "Queen's necklace," had brought to Marie-Antoinette a pair of diamond earrings of great splendor, for which he asked 600,000 francs. The Queen possessed a large quantity of diamonds; for, besides what she had already, the King had presented to her on different occasions various jewels which amounted in value to 300,000 francs. There had been riots on account of the price of bread, and distress was prevalent among the lower classes. Mercy, who considered the fresh purchase of diamonds for such a large sum both unnecessary and ill-timed, tried to dissuade the young Queen. But she could not resist the temptation, and finally agreed with the jeweler that the top diamonds of the earrings should be replaced by her own, and that the sum, thus reduced to 460,000 francs, was to be paid by instalments in four years. But while still owing 300,000 francs she was tempted by a pair of diamond bracelets, for which she partly paid by giving some of her own diamonds at a price below their value, but with the obligation of paying the remainder of the debt in money. When her funds were examined she had nothing left, and she was forced to ask the King for 2000 louis.[1] Always kind and indulgent to his wife, he did not utter a word of reproach, and gave her the sum for which she asked, merely remarking very gently that he was not surprised that she had no money, being so fond of diamonds.

[1] The louis d'or was then worth twenty-four francs. The present twenty-franc piece was introduced by Napoleon, and formerly bore his name.

Mercy related this story to Maria Theresa, who was much distressed. She writes to Mercy:

"Although my daughter was so young when she went away from here, I saw in her character a great deal of thoughtlessness, deficiency of application, and obstinacy as regards carrying out her own will, with plenty of adroitness in avoiding the remonstrances which one would wish to address to her. It is now evident that I was not mistaken in my judgment, and time only will show whether riper years and more maturity of judgment will correct these defects."

To Marie-Antoinette she writes:

"All the newspapers coming from Paris make it known that you have bought bracelets worth 250,000 livres; that you have consequently disturbed your finances and incurred debts; and that, to mend matters, you have sold your own diamonds at a very low price. It is also said that you lead the King into the excessive and needless expense which has increased to such a degree lately, and which adds so much to the present distress of the state. I believe all this to be exaggerated, but I think it is necessary that you should know the reports that are prevalent—loving you so tenderly as I do. These stories go to my very heart, especially when I think of the future."

To this reprimand Marie-Antoinette answers carelessly: "I have nothing to say about the bracelets. I should not have supposed that any one could trouble the kindness of my dear mama with such trifles."

SOPHIE-PHILIPPINE-ÉLISABETH-JUSTINE DE FRANCE.

AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO. N. Y., OF THE PAINTING BY
JEAN-MARC NATTIER, IN MUSEUM OF VERSAILLES

Maria Theresa retorts: "You are young, in a new country, and with natural gifts which are sufficient for you to become perfectly all that you should be; it is only frivolity that I fear,— and I cannot conceal my fears from you. You pass over the matter of the bracelets very lightly; but all this is not as you would wish it to be. A sovereign lady lowers herself by too much adornment of her person; still more if she goes so far as to spend large sums for the purpose; — and at what a time! I see only too much your love of dissipation; I cannot be silent, loving you as I do, for your good, and not to flatter you. Do not lose, through frivolous trifles, the good opinion that you won at first. The King is known to be very moderate, so the blame would fall on you alone. I do not wish to outlive such a change."

But Marie-Antoinette was accustomed to being scolded by her mother, and had ceased to pay much attention to her reprimands, save when Mercy or the Abbé de Vermond appealed to her heart and her filial devotion. She then took fresh resolutions, and promised reform, but soon resumed her former errors. Her present engrossing wish was to appoint the Princesse de Lamballe to the post of *Surintendante*, or Mistress of the Household. The high salary and supreme authority belonging to this post had caused it to be suppressed by the late Queen, on account of the incessant difficulties which it occasioned in the daily intercourse with the other

ladies. It was objected also that the Princesse de Lamballe was far too young for such a position. Madame de Noailles, now Maréchale de Mouchy, declared that having always held the highest rank in the Queen's household, she would not submit to having even a princess of the blood placed above her and invested with any portion of her prerogatives. The ministers offered as objections the increase of expense and the absolute inutility of the appointment. But the young Queen was determined to carry her point, as she said, "to make my friend happy, and myself too at the same time."

At last Madame de Noailles (de Mouchy) sent in her resignation, and the Queen had no rest till Madame de Lamballe was appointed *Surintendante*, with handsome apartments in the palace and a salary of 150,000 livres.

Marie-Antoinette had achieved her aim, and had besides proved her influence over the King; but his weakness was still further made evident with regard to the Comte de Guines. Although the judgment had been in the latter's favor, public opinion was so manifestly against him that the ministers insisted upon his recall from his post of ambassador in London. The Queen, who had warmly taken up his defense from the beginning of the proceedings, and who was piqued by his friends to show her influence, was extremely angry at the apparent slight thrown upon Guines, and insisted upon his receiving the title of duke as a compensation for the loss of the embassy.

She attacked the King so resolutely and vehemently that the "poor man" (as we have seen that she called him) gave way once more, and wrote to Guines announcing that he would receive the title of duke. Not only did Marie-Antoinette force the King to write himself, but she tore up the letter three times, and made him write it again, because she did not consider the terms he used sufficiently gracious and flattering. Upon this, two of the ministers, Turgot and Malesherbes, sent in their resignations. Thus the thoughtless young Queen incurred the responsibility of depriving the country of the services of two men, equally honest and estimable, whose wise measures might have succeeded in removing, or at least palliating, the terrible financial difficulties against which the country was struggling.

The marriage of the King's young sister, Madame Clotilde, with the Prince of Piedmont, afterward King of Sardinia, was the occasion of great rejoicings and of a splendid ball at Versailles, of which Horace Walpole gives an account in his letters. He writes with great enthusiasm of the Queen, saying that it was impossible to look at any other woman in her presence. "When seated, she seems the statue of Beauty; when she moves, she is grace itself." She wore a dress of silver tissue trimmed with pink blossoms of oleander, and danced the first minuet, in which etiquette required that she should never turn her back to the King, "which she performed divinely."

The wonderful charm which characterized Marie-Antoinette is dwelt upon by all contemporary writers. Every one seems to have felt its influence; those who were most prejudiced against her by popular gossip and satire were won over by a word or a smile even in her worst days of adversity. Unhappily, although always gracious and fascinating to those who came near her, she was yet so taken up by her intimate friends that few had an opportunity of doing so. She did not like old people, which, though extremely natural, was equally impolitic, for they were often the most influential, and she thus created enmities which became hotbeds of scandal.

After the marriage of Madame Clotilde (whom Horace Walpole describes as being "exactly of the size of the late Lord Holland," and who was called by the populace "the fat Madame"), the State Governess, the Comtesse de Marsan, resigned. She was replaced by her niece, the Princesse de Guéménée, as "Governess to the Children of France," of whom there was now only one, the little sister of Madame Clotilde, who was afterward known as the admirable "Madame Elisabeth," and whose intense grief at the separation awoke general interest and warm sympathy from Marie-Antoinette especially. Madame Clotilde was also extremely amiable, and became revered as a saint in Piedmont; but Marie-Antoinette was repelled by her appearance, and always showed a marked preference for the little Madame

Elisabeth. The Comtesse de Marsan had resented the indifference shown to her elder pupil, and still more the criticisms uttered by the Queen on the education she had given her, so that Madame de Marsan, who belonged to the illustrious house of Rohan and had in consequence wide-spread influence, became the Queen's bitter and mischievous enemy.

The Princesse de Guéménée, niece to Madame de Marsan, now filled her place to the great satisfaction of Marie-Antoinette. And yet the Princesse de Guéménée was separated from her husband and had a bad reputation!

CHAPTER VI

Rivalries and court jealousies — Evenings in the apartments of the Princesse de Guéménée — A chilling visitor — Noisy, undignified society — Privileges of the milliner Mlle. Bertin — The Queen's extravagance — Her frivolity — An adoption — Journey to France of Joseph II — The Queen's simplicity and ingenuousness — Impressions made by Joseph II on the King and Queen — A head-dress "too fragile to support a crown" — Impressions made on Joseph II by his visit — Return of her "evil genius" — Reports in the English newspapers — The Queen and Hume's "History of England."

ANOTHER fancy which had more serious consequences soon engrossed the Queen's attention. A young married lady of provincial nobility and straitened fortune, named the Comtesse de Polignac, was presented to the Queen during an accidental visit to a relative living at Versailles. Marie-Antoinette felt a strong attraction toward the very pretty and interesting Madame de Polignac. It was the age of excessive friendships; every one must have a bosom friend, another self, for whom everything must be sacrificed in the most romantic and unlimited fashion. So Madame de Polignac became the Queen's bosom friend, loved with all-absorbing affection. Poor Madame de Lamballe was neglected, and showed jealousy, without any result beyond scenes and quarrels with Madame de Polignac, which only irritated

Marie-Antoinette, who, as Mercy had prophesied, was getting tired of Madame de Lamballe's sleepy, rather silly sweetness. Both ladies, however, showed only too much their pretensions that the sacrifices which they claimed in the name of the sacred rights of friendship should all come from the Queen, and they vied with each other in their perpetual demands for favors of all kinds attended with pecuniary advantages for their families and their friends. The Queen, to pacify the one and to satisfy the other of her insatiable favorites, granted all that they asked, thus most abusively pressing on the deficient funds of the state.

Madame de Noailles's departure had removed the sole restraint on the Queen's fancies, and she now abolished the etiquette of the court as far as she could. She often suppressed the evening court circle, and went instead to the Princess de Guéménée, where she met undesirable society with still more undesirable familiarity, returning at a late hour, with no other escort than the Comtesse de Polignac and a footman, to go through the guard-rooms full of soldiers! "There was no harm." Certainly not; but a good deal might be supposed. The Princesses de Lamballe and de Guéménée held rival "salons"; in the first was the whole set of the Palais Royal, with the Duc de Chartres[1] and his friends; the other represented all the Polignac coterie, with their ambitious views and intrigues, supported by the party of the

[1] Afterward Duc d'Orléans: known for his revolutionary principles.

minister Maurepas. The poor Queen was the tool of both. Ingenuous and full of confidence in the affection of those who professed to be her friends, she was far too communicative in her conversation, even in her letters; and of this over-frankness a treacherous use was made, especially by the Polignac party. Marie-Antoinette, in her sentimental affection, considered that it was her duty to conceal nothing from her "friend"; and thus her most private domestic concerns, with those of the King, were freely talked of to Madame de Polignac, through whom a great deal of private gossip oozed out to the public. The King rather liked Madame de Polignac, and was persuaded sometimes to accompany the Queen in her evening visits to Madame de Guéménée, where all the Polignac party assembled. But his presence chilled the exuberance of those present, who, knowing his methodical habits, anxiously awaited the hour of eleven, when the King punctually went off to bed. It is even stated that there were instances when the hand of the clock was slyly put forward to accelerate his departure! The Queen remained till a late hour, enjoying noisy merriment which was equally unsuited to her youth and to her illustrious rank. The same undignified style of intercourse followed her to the horse-races introduced by the Comte d'Artois, and which she greatly enjoyed and patronized. The Queen's "stand" had not the decorum of modern days. The Comte d'Artois set the example of freedom as yet unknown in court society, and the

Queen was surrounded by riotous young men who laughed uproariously and quarreled alternately in her presence, wearing their riding-coats and -boots instead of what had always been the indispensable court attire, and unceremoniously pillaging the refreshments prepared. The Comte d'Artois betted, lost, and flew into a fury without restraint in the presence of the young Queen, whose too indulgent levity was severely criticized by those who witnessed these scenes and "new manners." The Comte de Provence and his wife ("Monsieur" and "Madame") looked grave and dignified in silent protestation, which every one approved. "Monsieur" would not allow "Madame" to follow the Queen alone in her pleasure excursions and freaks; the Princess always apologized and kept aloof on the plea of her health, which caused unfavorable comparisons to fall on the Queen.

The passion of the latter for pleasure was carried so far that she was known to return at six in the morning from the Opéra ball, and to go off again to the races at ten o'clock! One of the court balls which began at eleven in the evening went on till eleven the next morning!

The Queen no longer allowed her ladies to dress her according to former etiquette; she retired into her private dressing-room, where Mlle. Bertin, the milliner, performed the office of dresser; and the Queen returned only for the official toilet, when the whole court was admitted, before going to mass.

The dislike of poor Marie-Antoinette for the manifold ceremonies which etiquette prescribed is easy to understand; but she might have dressed privately with her own women, for the admission into the Queen's most intimate privacy of a milliner living in constant intercourse with the fashionable world was certainly objectionable for many reasons.

Meanwhile the expenses of the young Queen went on increasing. The Comte d'Artois had introduced high play at the receptions of the Princesse de Guéménée. Marie-Antoinette, who at first did not care for cards, became interested and excited; finally, play became a passion, and she lost large sums which the King was often obliged to pay, her finances being insufficient, liberal as was her allowance. Her stables also assumed hitherto unknown proportions. The late Queen had a hundred and fifty horses; Marie-Antoinette had three hundred, with a total increase of expenditure amounting to 200,000 livres a year.[1]

The sums lavished on Trianon also caused murmurs; the garden alone had cost 150,000 livres, and the Queen had recently built a theater near the small palace. She had as yet given only one fête there, but it had been very costly, and the manner in which money had been squandered in the short space of two years (1774 to 1776) provoked general alarm.

The Princesse de Lamballe filled a post which was

[1] A totally useless appointment as equerry, with carriages, servants, and liveries provided by the King, was given to the husband of Madame de Polignac, for the sole reason that he was her husband!

considered not only utterly useless, but which was a source of constant difficulties and complications, with a salary of 150,000 livres. Besides all this, a number of pensions had been granted to her friends and protégés, merely because she asked for these favors.

But as time went on, the sums devoted to the Polignac family became outrageous, and caused universal indignation, with those satirical songs and lampoons which in France so easily produce infinite mischief. The reputation of Madame de Polignac was by no means immaculate, and the free-thinking principles which she openly avowed in matters of religion and morality made her a most undesirable companion for a young queen of only twenty-one years of age.

The Abbé de Vermond tried to remonstrate seriously, and leaves us a characteristic account of his interview with Marie-Antoinette. The Queen was talking of a certain bishop who had been her confessor, saying: "He wanted to make me devout [*dévote*, which implies exaggerated devotion]!"

"Up to that time," says the Abbé, "I had been merely a listener; but I then spoke: 'How would he have managed to make you devout? I have never been able to make you reasonable!' The Queen smiled, and seemed to require me to prove my words. 'For instance, Madame,' I retorted, 'your society, your friends of both sexes; you have become very indulgent as regards morality and reputation. I might prove that at your age such indulgence, espe-

cially with regard to women, produces a bad impression; but I will pass over the fact that you pay no attention either to the morals or the reputation of a woman, and that you make her your companion, your friend, only because you find her agreeable, although certainly these are not principles to be professed by a priest; but that misconduct of all kinds, bad morals, a stained or lost reputation, become apparently a title for admission into your society — this is what causes you the greatest possible injury. For some time, latterly, you have not even had the prudence to keep up an intimacy with at least some women having the fame of "reasonable" and good conduct.' The Queen listened to my whole sermon with a smile of acknowledgment and approval. I spoke gently, but in a tone of sorrow and pity. The Queen took up only one of my assertions by quoting, as having a good reputation, Madame de Lamballe alone. I said that this reputation would not last, and that her silliness would and could only increase. Her Majesty agreed with me as to this remark, and quoted several instances. What is to be done or hoped after such avowals without any desire or intention of a change?"[1]

The amiable disposition of Marie-Antoinette is again brought to light in this letter from the Abbé de Vermond; but reform was more and more improbable. She smiled good-humoredly, heard pa-

[1] Letter of the Abbé de Vermond, in the state papers of Vienna; no date, but supposed to have been written in 1776.

tiently all the disagreeable truths which were laid before her, but her imprudent follies only increased.

The Comtesse de la Marck, in her correspondence with Gustavus III of Sweden, thus describes Marie-Antoinette: "The Queen goes incessantly to the opera and to the play, gets into debt, interferes in law-trials, adorns herself with feathers and knots of ribbon, and laughs at everything!" Alas, no woman was ever destined to shed more bitter tears! But as yet she thought only of enjoying the passing hour. One of her familiar courtiers, the Baron de Besenval, lieutenant-colonel of the Swiss Guards, says that if the conversation in the Queen's presence ever took a serious turn, weariness was immediately depicted on her countenance. She cared for nothing but the light, witty small talk which so particularly characterized the period, when conversation was an art — an art which made all social intercourse delightful. Talleyrand says in his memoirs that only those who knew the "salons" of the time immediately preceding the Revolution could have any idea of the charm of society. Conversation was not, however, wholly frivolous except at the court in the presence of the young Queen, who could not bear anything "serious." Elsewhere the grave political problems of the day were discussed, with new liberal theories, the "philosophy" of the period, taken from the writings of the time, — Rousseau and his disciples, with their utopian visions of an earthly paradise of sentimental felicity, where every one would be virtuous, bene-

ficent to others, and enthusiastically grateful for benefits received: the "Fudge" of the "Vicar of Wakefield," but extremely attractive to the young and well-meaning, easily won over to delusions.

Marie-Antoinette, who was young, kind-hearted, and imaginative, was considerably influenced by the sentimental principles of the time, and dreamed of the most generous philanthropy, while the empty coffers consequent upon her extravagant expenses and losses at cards prevented her from performing the ordinary charities appertaining to her exalted position. On one occasion, however, she found an opportunity for romantic generosity, practised according to the theories of the time. She was driving in her carriage near Versailles, when a pretty child of four or five years, playing on the road, ran in front of the horses. They were immediately and successfully stopped, so that Marie-Antoinette, who was naturally much alarmed, had the satisfaction of seeing that he was not in the least hurt. With her usual kind-hearted impulsiveness, she stood up in her carriage and eagerly asked for his mother; but an old woman who ran out of a cottage told the Queen that he was her grandchild, the son of her daughter, who had died, leaving five grandchildren to her care. Marie-Antoinette immediately declared that she would take this one, and that all the others should be cared for. The old woman through her thanks repeated that "Jacques was very naughty — would he stay with her?" The Queen, however, took the child on her

knee, and gave orders to drive on, but was soon obliged to return to the palace, for Jacques screamed lustily, kicking the Queen and her ladies with all his might, and resisting all attempts to comfort or pacify him.

The decorum of the attendants was considerably disturbed when the Queen came into her apartments holding by the hand a little peasant boy who roared as loud as he could that he "wanted grandmother — brother Louis — sister Marianne!" One of the wardrobe-women who was appointed to take care of the child, after fruitless attempts to manage him, snatched him up and carried him off, still kicking, struggling, and screaming, without seeming in the least to appreciate his good fortune in having thus opportunely found a fairy godmother. The other children were put to school, and a couple of days later Monsieur Jacques, having been tamed in some degree, was brought to the Queen, decked in white silk and lace, a pink scarf fringed with silver, and a hat and feathers. He looked very pretty, and the Queen was delighted. The name Jacques being too unromantic, she dubbed him "Armand," and directed that he should be brought to her every morning at nine. He breakfasted with her, and often dined also, even when the King was present. She called him "my child," and fondled him to her heart's content. This unnatural system was continued till she had children of her own. Such transplantations are seldom successful, and this one was no exception to the rule;

for Jacques (Armand) turned out very badly, and became one of the most bloodthirsty among the revolutionists. He was killed at the battle of Jemmapes.

Marie-Antoinette was at all times exceedingly fond of children, and always showed the greatest kindness to her little nephew, son of the Comtesse d'Artois, although her own hopes and wishes seemed so far from being realized. But the insults of the populace, who pursued her with cries and reproaches for giving no heir to the crown, drove her almost to despair, and after the state baptism of the young Prince she rushed to her own private apartments, where she gave way to floods of tears. Then again, to silence her own sorrow, she had recourse to constant dissipation — balls, races, and, above all, the incessant excitement of habitual gambling, where she lost large sums and incurred considerable debts. The games of mere chance forbidden by police regulations in Paris were played now in the Queen's own apartments, with bankers from Paris who presided at the tables. With the strange freedom of admission which belonged to the customs of the period, persons who did not belong to the court could come to the tables, bet, and put money on the cards. There were scenes, quarrels, imputations of cheating, large sums lost and won. The King was displeased, but perpetually yielded to the wishes of the Queen and the Comte d'Artois, though saying plainly, with an attempt at a laugh: "*Vous ne valez rien tous tant que vous êtes!*" (You are a good-for-nothing set, all of you!)

LOUISE-MARIE DE FRANCE.

AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., N. Y., OF A PAINTING BY JEAN-MARC NATTIER.

Many of the nobility kept away from the court, fearing the losses consequent on such high play; the balls also became more and more deserted, because the habit was lost of paying respect to the Queen at her circle of Versailles, from which she was too often absent. Balls are mentioned where only ten or twelve ladies danced, among them those who did not actually belong to the court; and the Queen began to notice with uneasiness the increasing coldness of the aristocracy. Mercy, who saw matters rapidly progressing from bad to worse, incessantly lamented to Maria Theresa, giving minute details of the present state of affairs at the court. The Empress preached and remonstrated, but all to no avail; and finally it was settled that a long-talked-of journey of Joseph II to France should take place, that he might himself judge whether anything was to be done. Joseph II had frequently written in stringent terms to his sister, and on one occasion so harshly that Maria Theresa stopped his letter, fearing mischief. Marie-Antoinette, in fact, though always submissive to her mother, not unnaturally resented the interference of her brother; but it was hoped that family affection and cautiously reasonable language on the part of the Emperor Joseph might produce a lasting impression on the young Queen, so sad at heart in reality, and yet in appearance so volatile and superficial.

The Emperor Joseph II was only too much imbued with the liberal and "philosophical" doctrines

prevalent at the time. He began by declaring beforehand that he would not accept apartments at the palace of Versailles, wishing to play the part of a looker-on, with complete freedom, like any other casual traveler. In Paris, however, he consented to occupy rooms in the house of his own ambassador, Mercy, though strictly incog., under the name of the Count de Falkenstein; but at Versailles Mercy was obliged to engage rooms for him in a private house near the palace, and to furnish them as plainly as possible.

Joseph II, born in 1741, was thirty-six years of age at the time of his first visit to France, and consequently was fourteen years older than his sister Marie-Antoinette. The likeness, however, judging from the portraits kept at Versailles, was extremely remarkable. There is the same long, narrow, oval of the face, the same aquiline features, the same blue eyes and golden hair, the same Austrian lip. But the masculine version of the characteristics is far less attractive than what we see in the portraits of Marie-Antoinette.

The Queen hardly knew whether to rejoice at her brother's arrival, as she feared reproofs, with the more reason that, finding her finances in much disorder, she had appealed to Mercy for the winding up of her accounts. To her surprise and consternation, the total of her debts was found to amount to more than 487,000 livres. She saw the impossibility of paying such a sum herself, and although she shrank

from the avowal to the King, she was obliged to have recourse to his assistance. With his usual kindness, he at once took the debt upon himself, without a word of blame addressed to her, only asking for time to pay by instalments out of his privy purse, without having recourse to the funds belonging to the state, which he would not use for such a purpose. The Queen could not but be moved by such proofs of the King's real affection for her, and admitted, in conversing with Mercy, that she had not yet made a sufficient return. She seemed, as usual, impressed by Mercy's remonstrances, but she was afraid of those that she might receive from her brother the Emperor. He wrote, however, that he came not to examine nor to criticize, still less with the intention of taking her to task, but with the sole aim of seeing his royal sister, and that he wished for nothing that could disturb that satisfaction.

The Emperor's journey was, however, delayed through different circumstances till the 18th of April, when he arrived in Paris at seven in the evening. Mercy was suffering from an indisposition which was sufficiently serious to oblige him to keep his bed, but the Emperor came to his bedside immediately, and spent part of the evening with him in earnest conversation, during which Mercy carefully explained all that he was about to witness.

The Emperor went to Versailles early the next morning, and reached the palace at half-past nine. According to his particular request, the Abbé de

Vermond came immediately to the carriage door, and led the Emperor, alone, by a back staircase into the Queen's private rooms, without being seen by any of the courtiers. The brother and sister embraced, and remained silent for a short space, as if overcome by their feelings. The Queen then led the Emperor into an inner room, and there they had the satisfaction of remaining alone together, and conversed freely for two hours, the Emperor speaking so affectionately to the Queen that with her characteristic ingenuousness she poured out to him all of her private sorrows, and even her follies, her habits of dissipation, her taste for high play, her friends and favorites, but with a little more reticence as regards the latter.

The Emperor, who had not intended to enter immediately upon such delicate subjects, answered cautiously and kindly, merely pointing out the great importance of such matters, adding that he would carefully think over all she had said. The Queen then took him to the King, who embraced him and tried to give him a cordial welcome, but with the awkwardness which was always the consequence of his constitutional shyness. The good-humored ease of manner shown by the Emperor soon modified this only too much; for two days later the Emperor, having gone with the Queen to take supper in the apartments of "Madame" (Comtesse de Provence), the King and his brothers were so completely at their ease that they ran after each other and threw themselves on sofas like romping school-boys, to the great

mortification of the Queen and also of the Comtesse de Provence, who called impatiently to her husband, saying that she had never seen him behave so childishly. The Emperor took no notice, and continued to converse with the princesses without showing surprise.

On the following day the Queen took him to Trianon with only two ladies-in-waiting, and dined there; but after dinner she walked on alone with the Emperor in the gardens, and there they had again a long and intimate conversation, Joseph II reverting to all the objectionable points of her habitual conduct, and speaking strongly but kindly of the errors which she had acknowledged to him. She agreed with his expostulations, acknowledged her own failures, continued her confessions, but made no promises beyond the simple statement that "a time would come when she would follow such good advice." The Emperor did not like the Princesse de Lamballe; the Queen admitted that she had been mistaken when she gave her the appointment of *Surintendante*.

The Emperor went to the races, and was extremely displeased at the style prevalent there, of which he had been warned by Mercy. On the Sunday he spent the day at Versailles, to witness all the public functions of that day, of which he writes to his brother Leopold:

"Yesterday I saw a Sunday celebrated at Versailles *in publico:* the levee, the mass, the public dinner. I was in the crowd as a mere looker-on.

I must own that this was amusing, as I play my part on the stage so often, I enjoy an opportunity of seeing it played by others."[1]

By the Queen's desire he accompanied her to an evening reception in the apartments of the Princesse de Guéménée, and was painfully impressed by what he saw there, telling the Queen plainly that it was "a regular gambling-house" ("un vrai tripot").

Without losing any opportunity of having long and exhaustive conversations with the King and Queen, the Emperor visited in Paris all the sights interesting to travelers, and among others the Jardin des Plantes, where Buffon was prevented by illness from doing the honors; but the Emperor kindly visited him in his apartments, and took an opportunity of saying with a smile: "I come to fetch the copy of your book that my brother left behind him."

Many things surprised the Emperor disagreeably at Versailles which are also mentioned by Horace Walpole: the dirt and neglect of the entrance of the palace, the strange freedom of access tolerated, and the sight of booths like a fair in the vestibule, and even on the landings of the staircases, where various articles were freely bought and sold. The Queen was sometimes annoyed by the plain-spoken criticisms of her brother, who did not always spare her personally, even in the presence of her ladies, which was naturally painful to her.

On one occasion when she claimed his admiration

[1] Letter of the 29th of April, 1777: state papers of Vienna.

for an elaborate head-dress with a quantity of feathers, Joseph II looked grave, and hesitated.

"Why, do you not like it?" said the Queen, with some disappointment.

"Some people may think it pretty," replied the Emperor; "but it is really *too fragile to support a crown.*"

The Queen felt the lesson conveyed, and was piqued. She wished the Emperor to return with her to the reception of Madame de Guéménée, but he positively refused; and as she persisted in going, he spent the evening with Mesdames in the apartment of Madame Adelaide.

The young Princess Elisabeth, who was just growing out of childhood, pleased him so much that there were rumors of an intended marriage in the future, but this does not seem to have had any real foundation; the Emperor had lost two consorts, and was unwilling to marry a third time.

After many conversations with the King and Queen, the Emperor's advice to both, and the reasons that he laid before them, seemed to have produced the best impression, although Marie-Antoinette told her brother playfully that a longer visit would enable him to be more useful to her, but that they would often quarrel. To Mercy she said that she felt the truth of the Emperor's remarks to her, and that she would follow his advice, but after his departure, for she did not wish to seem to be led by him, which was very characteristic of the wilful, though amiable,

nature of the young Queen. Finally, in a last affectionate interview she begged the Emperor to leave her a summary of his advice in writing, which he agreed to do, after being privately warned by Mercy to abridge it as far as possible, or the Queen would never read it!

The King, notwithstanding his natural reserve and shyness, was won over by his brother-in-law, to whom he spoke far more openly and confidentially than was usual with him.

The advice, somewhat in the form of an examination of conscience, was left by the Emperor in the Queen's hands; but when she read it, she said immediately as Mercy feared, that she would reply on all points, proving that her conduct had always been just and reasonable!

The parting was extremely affectionate. The Emperor was much moved, and after his departure the Queen had an attack of hysterics, which, however, had no bad consequences. She spent the following day at Trianon, and would see no one but the Princesse de Lamballe, the Comtesse de Polignac, and one lady-in-waiting.

The impressions left on Joseph II by his visit to Versailles will not be read without interest. To the Empress, his mother, he writes: "I left Versailles with sorrow, being really attached to my sister. I found with her the sort of sweetness in life which I did not expect to enjoy again, but of which I find that I have not lost the taste. She is amiable and

charming. I spent with her hours and hours, without perceiving how they fled. She showed considerable feeling when I left her, but she did not lose her self-command. I was obliged to gather up all my moral strength to be able to get away."

To his brother Leopold the Emperor says: "I leave Paris without regret, although I was extremely well treated there. Versailles was a greater sacrifice, for I was really attached to my sister, and her sorrow at our separation increased my own. She is an amiable and virtuous woman, rather young, rather giddy, but with a foundation of virtue and rectitude which really deserves all respect; with that, a quickness of intelligence and an accuracy of penetration which often surprised me. Her first impression is always the true one."

Elsewhere he says: "Her virtue is immaculate, even austere, by nature rather than by reason." Alluding to the King, he thus describes his character: "The man is weak, but he is no fool. He has principles; he has judgment: but both body and mind are in a state of torpor. Though capable of carrying on a sensible conversation, he has no desire, no curiosity, for knowledge. In short, the word, Let there be light! has not yet been spoken; matter is still in a chaotic state."

Marie-Antoinette writes to her mother: "Madame my very dear mother, the separation from my brother has given me a most painful shock; I have suffered all that it is possible to bear, and my only

comfort is that he shared my sorrow. All the family here were much moved.

"I should be very unjust if my grief, and the degree to which I miss him, left me only regret. Nothing can compensate for the happiness that I enjoyed and the proofs of affection which I received from him. I was sure that he only wished for my happiness, and this is proved by all his advice; I shall never forget it. The only thing that failed him was the necessary time to know more thoroughly the people with whom I must live."

Mercy hopes for reform; but he is soon obliged to admit that the Queen is returning to all her former errors, and that he fears greatly for the future, the improvement having been only temporary, and during an absence of her "evil genius," the Comte d'Artois, whose persuasions on his return soon induced her to resume high play, dissipation, late hours, and questionable society. Soon the hot weather induced other amusements subject to great objections, but also suggested by the Comte d'Artois. The terrace of Versailles was open to the public; at his instigation military bands were established there in the evenings; while to enjoy the cool air, the royal family came upon the terrace and mixed freely with the crowd. The Queen and the princesses at first kept together, but gradually they separated, and often had only the arm of one lady-attendant as they walked about till a late hour. The Queen, with her usual absence of caution, became more and

more imprudent, even to sitting down upon public benches, and allowing herself to be addressed by strangers!

All kinds of reports became prevalent. The English newspapers took up the matter with great exaggeration; soon the most unjust and most disgraceful accusations were directed against the Queen, and very generally believed.

But Marie-Antoinette would not understand that such things, though harmless, must not be done. There was no harm. She delighted in walking about by moonlight in the cool of the night; she was amused by the mistaken belief that she was not recognized, and she did not see why she was to be prevented from doing what was not wrong. It was only when too late that she perceived the infinite mischief caused by her levity.

The Queen had made the sacrifice of reading Hume's "History of England" with the Abbé de Vermond, and this she considered sufficiently virtuous to cover many sins! Mercy, though giving her the credit of this great effort, writes in despair that he believes the Emperor's written advice to have been thrown into the fire!

CHAPTER VII

Fontainebleau in 1777 — The Queen's day at Fontainebleau — Constant association with the Comtesse de Polignac — Extravagance of Comte d'Artois — Hopes of an heir to the crown — Political difficulties — Interference of Marie-Antoinette in favor of Austria — Pressing letters from Maria Theresa — The Queen is more than ever called "the Austrian" — Madame Elisabeth's household — Household of the future heir — Birth of a daughter — Chimney-sweepers at the birth of a royal child — Witchcraft and a wedding-ring — Madame de Genlis.

THE court went to Fontainebleau, and there the Queen showed Mercy her new private apartments, beautifully decorated and furnished with her usual carelessness as regards expense. The parquet flooring has still her initials in marquetry, "M. A." The *espagnolette* bolts of the large windows are said to have been the work of Louis XVI. These rooms were the favorite retreat of the Empress Eugénie at Fontainebleau.

The day of Queen Marie-Antoinette during her visit there in 1777 is thus described by Mercy: "The Queen rose between ten and eleven. Whenever I came to the anteroom at that hour, her Majesty called me in, and condescended to converse with me, sometimes for a long time. The King came to see the Queen, but did not remain more than a

quarter of an hour. Monsieur (Comte de Provence) and Monsieur le Comte d'Artois came in succession. The first did not remain long; the visit of the second was more prolonged. The Queen then went out *en déshabillé*, and often took her breakfast with Madame de Polignac before going to visit either Madame[1] or the Comtesse d'Artois or the Mesdames de France. The toilet followed; then her Majesty went to mass; on returning from the chapel, she dined with the King, except on hunting-days. This meal lasted only about half an hour; some prince or princess of the royal family usually came in. After another half-hour of conversation the King retired to his own apartments, and the Queen remained alone; then her Majesty went sometimes, though rarely, to the Princesse de Lamballe, but more often and almost habitually to the Comtesse de Polignac, whose apartments are very near those of the Queen. The interviews with that Countess are very long, and end only at the time for going to the play or the card-table up to the hour of supper, which takes place in the apartments of Madame or the Comtesse d'Artois or in the private apartments, but never in the Queen's, except on Sundays, when there is the public dinner. After supper the Queen goes to the Princesse de Guéménée, and plays till a late hour — sometimes two o'clock in the morning. The days are varied only by hunting-parties or races or rides on horseback and drives; but the great evil is that there

[1] Comtesse de Provence.

is not a moment for serious occupation of any kind, or for private conversation with the King. And yet, notwithstanding this incessant dissipation, the Queen is not pleasantly amused, and she condescended to tell me as much."

Mercy gives an appalling account of the expenses of the Comte d'Artois, besides his losses at cards, amounting often to three thousand louis at one sitting. The King had given him the use of the château of St. Germain,[1] and he not only spent large sums in alterations and repairs, but he bought a neighboring country-seat, called Maisons, which was utterly unnecessary, the total expense amounting to at least five millions of francs. He next took a fancy to rebuild a small house which he had in the Bois de Boulogne, called Bagatelle;[2] and wishing to give a fête there to the Queen by a fixed date, he employed nine hundred workmen night and day to get it built in six or seven weeks. As it was difficult to procure necessary materials in so short a time, the Comte d'Artois sent detachments of soldiers out on the high-roads to seize all the carts they met laden with what was required. Everything was paid for on the spot; still the arbitrary proceeding caused great murmurs of the public against the King, who tolerated such abuses, and the Queen, who was supposed to favor them. To Mercy's expostulations Marie-Antoinette

[1] Known especially as the residence of James II of England during his exile.

[2] Bagatelle still exists in the Bois de Boulogne, and was the property of Sir Richard Wallace.

answered that she was very far from approving her brother-in-law's imprudent conduct, but that she had no power to stop it. The "Mesdames" were at Fontainebleau with the Queen, but lived very quietly, showing their disapprobation only by keeping away from the card-tables and the evening receptions.

The Queen continued to act as before, and all expostulation seemed useless. Mercy laments over the same errors: high play, debts paid with unlimited patience by the King, no money left for charities — and public murmurs at the omission, incessant dissipation, overweening affection and excessive confidence shown to Madame de Polignac, who persistently made use of her influence to obtain incessant favors and large grants of money for her own family and friends. In vain Maria Theresa wrote to her daughter: "Your future makes me tremble!" Marie-Antoinette was blind. In vain also the Emperor wrote to his sister in the harsh tones provoked by impatience: the Queen was irritated, yet made no change.

But could even the previsions of either Maria Theresa or Joseph approach the reality of what that dreaded future was to be?

At length the official announcement of the hopes of an heir to the crown produced a favorable reaction not only on the part of the nation, but also as regards the Queen herself, who, feeling the responsibility of a position so long desired, and which was now a source of so much happiness to her, proved

docile to all that was advised by matrons, physicians, and the friendly ambassador Mercy.

But soon a political question troubled what at first was such pure joy—the complications induced by the rival pretensions of Prussia and Austria with regard to the Bavarian possessions. After the death of the Elector, Maria Theresa had much wished to act diplomatically, without any immediate aggression; but her fiery son Joseph was all for what he called energetic measures, and had already entered Bavaria. Upon this Frederick II responded by the invasion of Bohemia. The French nation remained indifferent, public interest being so engrossed by the war for independence in America and the embassy of Franklin, who had roused French enthusiasm to its highest pitch, that the nation cared little for Austria.

The hope of Maria Theresa and her son lay in the influence of Marie-Antoinette over Louis XVI to consolidate the French alliance. The Empress certainly felt the danger of too direct interference; she said that the Queen must not "make herself importunate to the King and odious to the nation"; yet, pressed by necessity and the claims of Austrian interests, she wrote again and again urging her daughter to use her influence over the King. Mercy talked, argued, and persuaded; finally, Marie-Antoinette spoke earnestly to Louis XVI on the manœuvers of Frederick II and the danger of a coolness as regarded the alliance; but Louis XVI answered with characteristic roughness: "It is the ambition of your

DUCHESSE DE POLIGNAC.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., N. Y., OF A PAINTING BY MME. VIGEÉ LEBRUN, IN MUSEUM OF VERSAILLES.

family that will overturn everything; they began with Poland, and now Bavaria becomes the *second volume;* I am sorry for your sake."

"But," replied the Queen, "you cannot deny, Monsieur, that you were informed of this Bavarian matter, and that you agreed to it."

"So little agreed," exclaimed the King, "that orders have been given to our French envoys to make known in the courts where they represent us that this invasion of Bavaria has been done against our will, and that we disapprove it."

Personally, Maria Theresa had been opposed to the aggression in Bavaria, which she calls a "firebrand thrown in Europe"; but now that it could no longer be prevented, she was passionately eager for the support of France as her best hope in the difficulties and reverses which she foresaw for Austria.

In a letter to Marie-Antoinette she writes: "A change in our alliance *would be my death.*" Mercy, who was present when the Queen read this, saw her turn pale, and said what he could to deepen the impression produced. Yet how difficult and dangerous was the position of Marie-Antoinette, placed as she was in the midst of such adverse circumstances!

The Emperor Joseph also wrote to the Queen, winding up his letter with these words, which made her miserable: "Since you will not prevent the war, we will fight like brave fellows; and in any case, my dear sister, you will not have to blush for a brother who will ever deserve your esteem." Poor Marie-

Antoinette wept on reading this, and repeated, "How troubled I am concerning my mother!"—knowing how anxious and unhappy the war, and the part that her sons must play in it, made the Empress.

The poor Queen tried to advance the Austrian interests, and made Mercy write down what she was to say to the ministers, which she copied, burning the original notes in Mercy's handwriting as a measure of prudence. But she writes despairingly to her mother: "I am grieved at my inability to reach the minds of all these ministers so as to bring them to understand how just and reasonable is all that is done and demanded at Vienna; but, unfortunately, there are none so deaf as those who will not hear, and besides, they have such a quantity of words and speeches that mean nothing, that they are bewildered before they can say anything reasonable. I will try speaking to both in the King's presence, to obtain that they should, at least, hold proper language to the King of Prussia. . . . I should be miserable if my dear mama could suspect him[1] on account of all that is going on. No; it is the wretched weakness of his ministers, and his own diffidence as regards himself, which do all the mischief; and I am sure if ever he takes counsel from his own feelings, every one will see his honesty, his just views, and a degree of tact which is far from being fairly judged at present."

Maria Theresa continues, however, to press her daughter earnestly, while Mercy is prodigal of ex-

[1] Louis XVI.

planations and advice. The letters of the mother and daughter express more and more of anxiety and affliction. The Queen waited with intense suspense for the news from Bohemia, and the King found her in tears. Poor Louis, alarmed at her distress, told her that he could not bear to see her so anxious; that he wished to do anything in the world that could comfort her; that he was always inclined to do so, but that his ministers had stopped him, the interest of his people not allowing him to do more than he had done. The Queen then argued the matter with him, winding up by a passionate scene with Maurepas, to whom she expressed great anger.

Alas! the poor young Queen was more and more winning the name of "the Austrian," which stigmatized her to the last.

Mercy at this time relates a charming scene with Marie-Antoinette, in which she showed the characteristic simplicity and ingenuousness of her essentially amiable nature, which only wanted more firmness of purpose to become all that could be desired. The Queen had seemed more sad and depressed than usual; at last, with a sudden impulse of almost childish confidence, she told Mercy that she would "make her general confession"; and then dwelt in detail, with much self-reproach, on all the particulars of her private life, begging for his advice and opinion on all her failings. There was a long conversation, in which Mercy did not spare her. She listened attentively, saying that her present sadness made the

time favorable for serious thought on her future conduct, and that she felt the necessity of coming to a decision.

A féte was to be given to the King at Trianon, and preparations had been made; but it was countermanded by the Queen, who said, with tears, that she could not bear to indulge in amusements when she had to share the sorrows and anxieties of her mother. She even wished to give up all court pleasures till the political difficulties had taken a favorable turn; but even Mercy told her that this would be too much, and would be misjudged.

In one of her letters to the Empress she says: "I wish that I could give all my blood that my dear mama should be happy and enjoy all the prosperity and peace that she deserves so well!"

Notwithstanding her distress and her strenuous efforts, all that Marie-Antoinette could obtain from the French government was a promise that no aggression against the Austrian Netherlands would be permitted.

The summer was very hot, and the Queen resumed her public evening walks on the terrace of the palace till a late hour of the night, while the infamous reports of the preceding year were renewed and assumed greater consistency. A whole packet of songs and lampoons, in which the Queen was freely insulted, was thrown into one of the rooms[1] devoted to the use of the courtiers, by whom it was taken to

[1] The "Œil de Bœuf."

the King, who expressed astonishment and anger, saying that he had himself been occasionally present at these evening recreations, and that they were perfectly innocent.

But, alas! in the case of those surrounded by eager and watchful enemies, to *seem* innocent it is not enough that actions should *be* innocent!

As the time drew near when the birth of her child was expected, Marie-Antoinette, always kind and considerate to those around her, "and only too easy as regards matters concerning her service" (according to the testimony of one of her attendants), began to think of the obligations of etiquette which would be painful to her ladies, who were required to watch all night during a fixed space of time. She could not prevent this, but she tried to procure as much relief as possible by having large reclining-chairs made which could be folded back so as to form the best possible substitute for a bed.

In preparation for the great event, the household of the royal child was appointed, comprising eighty functionaries "devoted to its royal person," according to the language of Mercy—a manifest absurdity in the case of an infant, even though the child of a king and queen. Yet he praises the moderation of the Queen, as well as her judicious wish to avoid awakening feelings of pride in consequence of too many attendants.

At the same time the household of the young Madame Elisabeth was appointed, and the Polignac

influence being still supreme, the Comtesse Diane de Polignac, an unmarried sister of the Comte de Polignac, was named *dame d'honneur*, or "first lady," to the young Princess — a choice due entirely to the favor and protection of the Queen, although the clever and witty Comtesse Diane de Polignac was in all essentials utterly unfitted to be the guide and counselor of the King's young sister, being noted for her freedom of conduct, which equaled her freedom of speech. Fortunately, Madame Elisabeth had been admirably educated by her sub-governess, the Baronne de Mackau, who retained great influence over her mind and character.

The birth of an heir to the crown was anxiously expected; but, alas! the child born on the 20th of December, 1778, proved to be a princess, and consequently could not succeed to the throne.

The barbarous custom of admitting any one who came at the time of the birth of the child nearly cost the Queen her life, and for a few moments she was in imminent danger. The rush of the crowd, so unrestrained that two chimney-sweepers climbed on the furniture to have a better view; the deficiency of necessary air, and it is also said an imprudent sign from the Princesse de Lamballe which made known to the mother the sex of the child, caused such a complication that the Queen fell into convulsions. The medical attendants imperatively demanded air, and decided on taking blood immediately. Nothing had been prepared for the emer-

gency, but nevertheless one of the surgeons opened a vein in the Queen's foot, the King rushed to the windows, and, although they had been pasted with paper strips, tore them open with his characteristic strength, while the attendants forcibly cleared the room, roughly pushing out the intruders. The blood flowed freely, and the Queen recovered consciousness, to the intense joy of all present.

And yet, had it been possible to foresee what her death would be a few years later, could any one have rejoiced to see her restored only to meet such a fate? But, happily, the future is unknown!

Four nurses were in readiness for the child — the fortunate foster-mother to be chosen at the last moment by the attending physicians, and the three others to be kept in readiness to supply any deficiency. For three years an attendant was required to remain dressed by the child's cradle during the whole night. The "children of France" could not be left to sleep like ordinary mortals!

The child whose birth caused so much disappointment was named Marie-Thérèse-Charlotte,[1] and was officially called "Madame, fille du roi," or, by abbreviation, "Madame Royale," which was afterward definitively adopted as her designation, to distinguish her from the numerous other "Mesdames."

Mercy interfered energetically to obtain due quiet in the Queen's bedchamber, and insisted upon the admissions to her presence being limited to the whole

[1] Known as the Duchesse d'Angoulême. She died in 1851.

royal family, her two principal ladies, the Princesse de Lamballe, the Comtesse de Polignac, the physicians, and the Abbé de Vermond. Any one would suppose that this would be more than enough; but Mercy plumes himself on his firmness in this respect, and attributes to the "quiet" preserved round the Queen the satisfactory state of her health during the succeeding period.

True, royal personages are accustomed to have so many attendants habitually around them that their impressions cannot be the same as those of private individuals!

Shortly after the birth of the young Princess the Queen received a sealed box with a letter purporting to come from a parish curé who had received the mission, under the seal of confession, to return the Queen's wedding-ring, which she had lost many years before, as she supposed while washing her hands. This ring had been purloined, as was now confessed, to be used in practices of witchcraft to prevent the Queen from having children! The name of the wicked culprit was never divulged, and with her usual generosity the Queen would not even try to guess it.

When Marie-Antoinette began to receive officially after her recovery, the Duchesse de Chartres,[1] after making her obeisance, presented to the Queen the apology of Madame de Genlis, state governess to the princes of Orléans, who was prevented by indis-

[1] Afterward Duchesse d'Orléans.

position from offering her respects. The Queen, who disliked Madame de Genlis, and whose native haughtiness easily came to the surface in such cases, replied coldly that she might have remarked the absence of Madame de Genlis, but that her rank was not sufficient to authorize a formal apology. It is supposed that the intense hatred shown by Madame de Genlis toward the Queen may have had no more serious origin than this rebuff addressed to a woman of excessive vanity. Madame de Genlis became the Queen's bitter enemy, and the influence which by very questionable means she obtained at a later period over the Duc de Chartres, who became Duc d'Orléans, produced infinite mischief in more troublous times.

CHAPTER VIII

The Queen coldly received at the thanksgiving service — Fresh resolutions — The Opéra masked balls — A Queen in a hackney-coach — False reports — The Queen has the measles — Unexpected sick-nurses — The Queen goes to Trianon for her convalescence — Abolition of etiquette at Trianon — Unfounded rumors concerning the Queen — An old coxcomb — Story of a heron plume — Causes of bitter enmity against the Queen — Perilous friendship — The theater of Trianon — A majestic soubrette — Madame de Lamballe — Death of Maria Theresa — Grief of the Queen.

THE disappointment at the birth of a princess was great in the general world; and although much might have been forgiven to the mother of a dauphin, the impression of old grievances now prevailed, and the Queen was coldly received in Paris when she went to Notre-Dame for her thanksgiving service.

The King and Queen, however, forgot all in the joy of having a child, and showed the greatest affection for the little Princess. Marie-Antoinette began to make plans for her education, and her letters are full of the pretty details so dear to young mothers: the child's first smile of recognition, her first tooth — more than all, the first word pronounced, "papa," and the King's joy!

But although she expresses, as usual, the best reso-

lutions,—although she declares that her past failings were due to childishness and thoughtlessness, but that now she is much more serious,—the reform which really took place at last was not durable till the birth of the Dauphin, which did not occur for more than two years.

Meanwhile the Queen still continued her visits to the Opéra masked balls, open to so many objections, where she was followed by only one lady-in-waiting, and with the livery of her servants concealed by gray overcoats. On one of these occasions her carriage broke down, and the Queen was obliged to alight with the Duchesse de Luynes, who accompanied her, and to take refuge in the nearest shop. As there seemed to be no chance of getting the carriage repaired within reasonable time, a lackey called a hackney-coach, in which the Queen and her attendant reached the opera-house. Marie-Antoinette was only diverted by the strange situation in which she was placed, and without in the least understanding the interpretation to which such an adventure would give rise, she whispered to all those known to her whom she met at the Opéra ball: "It is I, and in a hackney-coach! How amusing!" But the following day the story had spread through all Paris, with every possible exaggeration and insulting supposition. Who could be surprised at this? What young woman in private life could indulge in such imprudent acts without risking her reputation? And yet she had done no wrong!

Shortly afterward the Queen was attacked with measles, and fearing infection for the King, desired him to keep away from her bedchamber during her illness. In this poor Louis XVI submissively acquiesced, which caused some irritation to the Queen, who expected him to be more reluctant to leave her; while he no less submissively authorized the presence of four gentlemen belonging to her intimate circle who remained daily with her till night. This naturally caused many remarks, many criticisms; and at the court it was asked very openly and derisively: "Which *four ladies* would attend the King should he take the distemper?"

Before judging too severely this act of indiscretion it must be remembered that the custom of the time authorized the Queen to receive men habitually in her bedchamber; that there is safety in numbers; and that she was never alone in such cases, but always attended by several ladies. Still, on this occasion both Mercy and Maria Theresa considered that license was carried too far, the Empress expressing great displeasure at her daughter's "thoughtless act."

With the Queen's convalescence came the joy of the signing of peace between Austria and Prussia; but the war with England was still a source of considerable anxiety, though not of such intimate importance to Marie-Antoinette's private feelings.

The royal physicians prescribed change of air, and the Queen seized the long-desired opportunity of a sojourn at Trianon, in her "own house." She accord-

ingly removed there at once, and enjoyed the delight of living like a private individual, without the restraints of ceremony and etiquette. Her visit this time was short; but the step having been once taken, the Queen returned to Trianon at intervals, remaining there for a month at a time, and always without the King, who came only as a visitor to see his wife. These holidays of royalty were greatly enjoyed by the Queen, who even made over to the Comtesse de Polignac her prerogatives as mistress of the house, and established absolute freedom, so that no one even rose on her entrance, nor interrupted what they happened to be doing, the men continuing their game of billiards without taking notice of the Queen's presence, the ladies working at their embroidery or playing on musical instruments. A reaction against the old love of dress had so completely set in that during the visits to Trianon only white muslin, or even cotton, dresses were worn, with large straw-hats and muslin veils. The change was too complete and too sudden not to meet with disapproval, and those who had most sharply blamed the Queen for her extravagance in dress now blamed the exaggeration of her simplicity, which, it was said, would ruin the Lyons silk-trade. The "Mesdames" criticized, and did not consider such negligent attire compatible with royal dignity; even the republican Ferrand, in his memoirs, expresses rather shocked surprise on seeing "the Queen of France dressed in a crumpled cotton gown."

The dress was light, cool, and convenient, allowing her to run about freely in the walks of Trianon and to enjoy the pastoral pleasures in which she delighted. When once Marie-Antoinette had taken a fancy, she was not easily dissuaded. Even in the royal palace of Versailles, when in the summer afternoons she escaped to Trianon, holding a light cane in her hand, and followed only by a servant in the royal livery, she wore the Trianon *déshabillé* — the white dress and straw hat. When living at Trianon she was surrounded by what she called her "society," a certain number of friends of both sexes whom she admitted to intimacy, and who went about with her. The King, "Monsieur," and the princesses came to supper and to spend the evening. The Comte d'Artois was one of the privileged set who was admitted at all times; but those who came as visitors all went away together in the evening, at a late hour, leaving only a few ladies to remain with the Queen.

Popular rumor, however, was malevolent, and the absence of the King authorized the worst suppositions. Nevertheless, all reliable contemporary testimony absolves Marie-Antoinette from having ever been led into any actions which were not perfectly innocent; but she was always so confident as to her own pure intentions that she despised suspicious appearances far too much. From first to last this was the great evil of her life, the cause of immense mischief, for which she paid dearly at a later period.

Not only was Marie-Antoinette absolutely averse to anything really wrong, but she did not even tolerate in her presence any impropriety of language uttered around her. She was not opposed to gossip, either in the stories related to her or in the jests which, in fact, amused her; but anything licentious was stopped at once, though some writers refer to the catalogue of her library, which is certainly open to criticism. But when the characteristics of Marie-Antoinette's habitual employments are remembered, it is evident that she never read these books, nor probably even knew that they were in her possession; they were collected by her librarian on his own responsibility, without consulting the Queen. She did not care for any reading, and preferred every other occupation as a pastime.

Among all those who were admitted into her intimate society, either at Trianon during the summer, or in the private apartments at Versailles in the winter, two writers of memoirs — Besenval and Lauzun — have attacked the Queen's reputation. Both had drawn upon themselves a humiliation which they fully deserved; but as it is well known that

> He ne'er forgives who doth inflict the wrong,

neither could forgive Marie-Antoinette for having peremptorily asserted her dignity as a woman more even than as a queen. The former, the Baron de Besenval, was lieutenant-colonel of the Swiss

Guards, and being a gray-haired man of fifty, was looked upon as a sort of patriarch by the young Queen, who imagined that she might with complete impunity treat him with affectionate familiarity like a sort of grandfather. She had sincere friendship for Besenval, whose society was agreeable to her, and she freely showed that she liked him.

To her utter amazement, he presumed upon her careless good nature so far as to throw himself on his knees at her feet with a full love declaration. The whole seemed too absurd in the Queen's eyes to be worth taking in earnest, and with indulgent contempt she merely said: "Rise, monsieur; I shall not inform the King of what would throw you into permanent disgrace." Besenval turned pale and stammered an apology, while the Queen, with the haughty air which she well knew how to assume, walked out of the room.

Naturally Besenval was treated thenceforward with coolness, attributed in his memoirs to the Queen's caprices, but to which Madame Campan,[1] to whom Marie-Antoinette related the incident, gives us the key.

The adventure with the Duc de Lauzun was more serious, and is shamefully disfigured in his memoirs, which have recently attracted attention, in consequence of a clever biography published by Lucien Perey. Lauzun was a young and attractive courtier of the time, well known for his profligate conduct

[1] First lady of the bedchamber.

HOUSE OF THE SEIGNEUR, PETIT TRIANON.

and almost unlimited excesses. He was nearly related to the Duc de Choiseul; and this in itself was sufficient to attract the favorable notice of Marie-Antoinette, who admitted him into her intimate circle, notwithstanding the objections of Mercy, founded on his bad reputation. It was, however, more especially during the evenings, in the apartments of the Princesse de Guéménée, that the Queen frequently met Lauzun. One evening he appeared in military uniform, wearing a magnificent heron plume which Marie-Antoinette greatly admired. With lamentable deficiency of tact, the Princesse de Guéménée suggested that Lauzun should present this plume to the Queen, which he hastened to do. The Queen, who had never imagined that he would dare to offer her what he had worn himself, was considerably annoyed and still more puzzled as to what she ought to do; finally she decided to accept the plume, to wear it once, and to call his attention to the fact.

Certainly the proceeding was too gracious to be quite wise, but there was nothing that could justify the presumption of Lauzun. A few days later he asked for a private audience, which the Queen granted, as she would have done to any one of the same rank, Madame Campan, who was in waiting, remaining in the next room. A few minutes later the intervening door was suddenly opened by the Queen herself, who, in a raised and angry voice, exclaimed: "*Sortez, monsieur!*" ("Leave the room,

sir!") Lauzun bowed low and disappeared. The Queen was much agitated, and exclaimed: "That man shall never come again to my apartments."

The Duc de Lauzun became the intimate friend of the Duc d'Orléans, and one of the worst enemies of Marie-Antoinette during the Revolution. He was known at that time as Duc de Biron, having inherited the title from an uncle. In his memoirs he gives an account of the above scene, evidently disgracefully disfigured, and bearing the stamp of a coxcombry absolutely unworthy of a gentleman. The account given by Madame Campan in its perfect simplicity has evident probability, and seems to present the truth, while justifying Marie-Antoinette.

Once only the fair Queen was in real danger, which she escaped through the chivalrous conduct of the hero of the romance, Comte Axel de Fersen, a young Swedish nobleman who alone had the honor of having touched the heart of Marie-Antoinette without taking advantage of a momentary sentimental weakness.

The Comte de Fersen was totally unlike the courtiers who gathered round the Queen. This difference of character caught her attention, and then captivated her esteem, with a mixture of something more tender. Fersen was tall and handsome, gentlemanlike, but reserved in manner, without the grace and witty animation of the French courtiers; grave, self-possessed, strictly honorable in every word, in every act—a sort of Sir Charles Grandison, on whom

the Queen felt that she could rely as a friend, while feeling for him something more than friendship. A despatch addressed by the Swedish ambassador, Comte de Creutz, to Gustavus III initiates us into the particulars of this romantic incident:

"I must confide to your Majesty that the young Count Fersen found such favor with the Queen that several people took umbrage. I must acknowledge that I cannot help thinking that she liked him; I saw indications which were too sure to allow me to doubt. The conduct of the young Count Fersen was admirable in the modesty and reserve which he showed, and in his final determination of joining the war in America. His departure removed all danger, but evidently he required firmness to a degree very remarkable in a young man, to resist such fascination. The Queen could not take her eyes from him during the last days, and as she looked they filled with tears. I entreat your Majesty to keep this secret for her sake and that of the Senator Fersen.[1] When the Count's departure was known all the favorites were delighted. The Duchesse de Fitz-James said to him: 'What, monsieur! are you thus forsaking your conquest?' 'If I had made any, I should not forsake it,' he replied. 'I go from here free, and, unhappily, without causing any regret.' Your Majesty will acknowledge that this answer showed wisdom and prudence beyond his years."

Fersen was gone, but Marie-Antoinette had not lost

[1] The father of Count Axel de Fersen.

a friend who, when evil days came, showed absolute devotion with the same discretion and the same absence of all selfishness.

When he returned from America, the sentimental attraction which had temporarily moved Marie-Antoinette, in a manner which might have become perilous, had disappeared amid the terrible events of her daily life, which left her no leisure for romantic dreams. She knew, however, all the more how to appreciate a friend like Fersen, for whom she retained the greatest confidence and esteem, with attachment of a different kind, but more valuable than what had characterized her first impressions.

Meanwhile the Queen tried every means of diverting her mind and of struggling against the inexorable ennui which devoured her life, and which the care of the poor little girl, whose birth had brought so much disappointment, could only partly dispel.

Marie-Antoinette was passionately fond of everything appertaining to the stage, and the little theater which she had built at Trianon now occupied her thoughts. The decorations were now finished with a profusion of gilding which had entailed great expense; the hangings were of blue moiré silk looped up with gold cords, the seats of blue velvet. It was a little gem of its kind, and the actors of the Théâtre Français were called for its inauguration; but when they had appeared on the boards of the miniature stage the Queen began to dream of getting up private theatricals and appearing there herself.

This plan was not received with favor either by Mercy or by Maria Theresa, who distinctly said that she had never seen such amusements end in a satisfactory manner; but the Queen persisted, and was delighted with the new diversion. The King did not disapprove, and even showed great interest, following the rehearsals, and being present at the performances, where the King himself and the royal family had alone the right to appear as spectators.

The plays in which Marie-Antoinette acted would not be known to our readers; but according to the account of Mercy, who was admitted to a private box by special favor, she performed prettily, with infinite grace and piquancy. Other accounts are less laudatory, and may be more impartial; for it is scarcely possible to imagine the majestic Marie-Antoinette playing well the part of a soubrette, which she liked to undertake.

At first no one was admitted to these theatrical performances, with the exception of the royal family, and once only, as we have seen, the privileged Mercy. The actors were limited to the Polignac family and their intimate friends, with the Queen and the young Madame Elisabeth, who took small parts. Even Madame de Lamballe could not obtain permission to be present, and great was the anger of those excluded, who vainly pleaded the high posts which they filled, and their unquestionable rank, which seemed to entitle them to follow the Queen on all occasions. Poor Madame de Lamballe had now

many opportunities of seeing how completely she was set aside. She no longer resisted, but gradually withdrew from the court. She remained, however, sincerely and deeply attached to the Queen, who found her "faithful unto death" when evil days came and others fled.

While Marie-Antoinette was intent on discovering new diversions to while away time, a great grief was in store for her — the death of her mother, the Empress Maria Theresa, through an aggravated attack of an asthmatic affection which hitherto had not given cause for immediate alarm. In those days of slow communication the news of the death of the Empress came at the same time as that of her illness. The King, knowing the deep affection of the Queen for her mother, shrank from the painful task of communicating the event to her, and requested the Abbé de Vermond to do so, saying that his own visit would follow that of the Abbé at an interval of one quarter of an hour.

The grief of the Queen was extreme, and is thus expressed to her brother Joseph II: "Crushed as I am by the most dreadful misfortune, it is only through floods of tears that I can write to you. Oh, my brother, oh, my friend, you alone remain to me in a land which was and will always be so dear to me! Spare yourself, take care of yourself; you owe this to us all. I have only now to commend my sisters to your care; they have lost still more than I have; they will be very unhappy.

Adieu! I cannot see what I write. Remember that we are your friends — your allies. Love me! I embrace you."

Here stops the valuable journal of Mercy, and the daily register of every word, every act of Marie-Antoinette. Other and reliable information is within reach, but the regular and usually impartial narrative of Mercy, with the confidential correspondence between Maria Theresa and her faithful ambassador, cannot be replaced.

CHAPTER IX

Birth of the Dauphin — Joy of the King and Queen — Bankruptcy of the Prince de Guéménée — Its consequences — Duchesse de Polignac appointed State Governess of the "Children of France" — Visit of the King of Sweden — An unexpected guest at a royal dinner-table — Visit of the Grand Duke Paul of Russia and his consort — Etiquette concerning a bracelet — Death of the prime minister Maurepas — Appointment of Calonne and its consequences — Combined economy and extravagance of Louis XVI — Purchase of Rambouillet and St. Cloud — Montreuil and Madame Elisabeth — "Pauvre Jacques" — Unpopularity of the Queen.

THE birth of the long-expected Dauphin brought some comfort to Marie-Antoinette, although the Empress was denied the joy of an event which she had so earnestly desired. The young Prince was born October 22, 1781, three years after the little Madame Royale. The room was kept so quiet on this occasion that the Queen feared the birth of another daughter, and when settled in her bed, she said to the King: "See how reasonable I am. I have asked no questions."

The King, seeing that her anxiety ought not to be prolonged, then said, with his eyes full of happy tears: "Monsieur le Dauphin asks for admittance." The Queen with overpowering joy threw her arms

around him, and the father and mother then freely shared their happiness and gratitude for the boon granted at last, after so long an expectancy. The Princesse de Guéménée brought the child to the happy parents; when the Queen gave him back to her care, she said: "Take him — he belongs to the state; but I will keep my daughter for myself."

The son of the Comte d'Artois, the Duc d'Angoulême,[1] had till then been considered as the heir presumptive to the throne; the birth of a dauphin was consequently not particularly welcome to his father, and the little Prince having said, "How small my cousin is, papa!" the Comte d'Artois answered, with some bitterness: "The day will come when you will find him big enough!"

The poor child was not, however, destined to succeed to his father, and by his early death was spared the dreadful fate of his brother, known by the nominal title of Louis XVII.

The Queen had in all four children. The little Duke of Normandy, who became dauphin after the death of his elder brother, was born in April, 1785; and the youngest daughter, Sophie, was born in July, 1786. She died, at the age of eleven months, in June, 1787.

The Princesse de Guéménée did not long retain the honors appertaining to the care of the heir to the crown. Although separated from the Prince de Guéménée, she was his wife, and as such shared the

[1] Afterward married to Madame Royale.

disgrace of his bankruptcy, which amounted to a financial catastrophe causing the ruin of innumerable victims, and such public indignation that the Princess had no resource but to send in her resignation.

Every one supposed that the Comtesse (now Duchesse) de Polignac would be appointed to the vacant post of state governess to the "Children of France"; but, to general surprise, the Queen hesitated. Her brother, the Emperor Joseph, had expressed strongly his unfavorable opinion of Madame de Polignac and her set, and the Queen herself was beginning to lose some of her delusions. But the friends of the Polignac family told her so plainly that the appointment was universally expected that with some unwillingness she gave her consent, and the Duchesse de Polignac was officially appointed to the coveted post, with the use of splendid apartments in the palace of Versailles.

Notwithstanding some drawbacks and court worries, Marie-Antoinette was now happier than she had ever been before, and every one noted a marked improvement in her daily life, which had taken a far more serious turn. Her children engrossed her thoughts, and she no longer required incessant dissipation. She gave up high play, avoided debts, and was far more moderate in her amusements.

About this time she received first the visit of the King of Sweden, Gustavus III, traveling under the name of the Comte de Haga, and afterward the fu-

ture Emperor Paul of Russia, traveling with his consort under the name of Comte and Comtesse du Nord.

Gustavus was particularly fascinated by Marie-Antoinette, for whom he professed henceforward the most enthusiastic admiration, although the Queen was not very gracious to him; in fact, the coldness of his reception at Versailles caused great displeasure at the court of Sweden.

It is said that, with some absence of tact, he invited himself one day to dinner with the King and Queen. The latter immediately ordered that Madame Campan should be summoned. When she appeared the Queen desired her to see immediately the comptroller of the household, and ascertain whether the dinner was worthy to be presented to Monsieur le Comte de Haga, and to have it increased if necessary. The King of Sweden protested that there would certainly be enough for him; while Madame Campan, remembering the profusion of the royal dinners, was struck dumb with astonishment. The Queen looked displeased, and repeated her orders. When she had occasion afterward for the services of Madame Campan, the Queen asked why she had seemed so bewildered, adding that she ought to have understood her intention, which was that of making the King of Sweden feel that he had taken a liberty. Madame Campan answered that the whole scene had seemed to her so "bourgeois" that she had thought of the mutton chops and omelet

to which housewives in small private families had recourse to provide for an unexpected guest when the dinner was scanty! The Queen was much amused, and told the King, who also laughed heartily.

The Comte and Comtesse (Grand Duke Paul and his consort) seem to have been more refined and courtly in their manners than Gustavus. Like the King of Sweden, however, they refused the hospitality of the royal palace, for the sake of more liberty. The first visit of the Grand Duchess had been to the milliner, Mademoiselle Bertin, who performed a remarkable achievement for the presentation to the Queen—a dress of brocade bordered with pearls on a hoop having six ells of circumference!

The Queen was much pleased with the Grand Duchess, with whom she was soon on the most friendly terms. The future Emperor Paul also showed the greatest tact and courtesy, with which every one was charmed. The Grand Duchess had with her the Baroness d'Oberkirch (the "bosom friend" so characteristic of the period), whose charming memoirs give a detailed and graphic account of the imperial visit. She seems to have been completely charmed by the Queen, and cannot say enough in praise of her beauty, her grace of manner, and her amiability. Marie-Antoinette multiplied her attentions to the Grand Duchess. On the day of the first performance at the theater of Versailles the Queen said, addressing her guest: "I think, Madame, that like myself you are rather

near-sighted. I always use a glass set in my fan; will you try this one?"

The Grand Duchess took the beautiful fan, adorned with diamonds, which the Queen handed to her, and after trial found the glass excellent. "I am delighted," said the Queen; "and I hope you will keep it." "I accept it willingly," answered the Grand Duchess, "as it will enable me to see your Majesty better."

When they visited the manufactory of Sèvres, the Grand Duchess was shown a splendid toilet-set adorned with gold. On examining it, she found her own device on each article; it was a present from the Queen.

The Baroness d'Oberkirch relates a characteristic incident of etiquette. At the Queen's circle, after a gracious reception, Marie-Antoinette asked to look at a bracelet with the portrait of the Grand Duchess which the Baroness wore. Madame d'Oberkirch took it off; but nothing could be handed in a direct manner to the Queen. The Baroness opened her fan, laid the bracelet upon it, and tried to present it thus; but the weight broke the fan, and the bracelet fell to the floor. Madame d'Oberkirch, with the ready presence of mind of one accustomed to court etiquette, picked it up, and handed it to the Queen, saying: "Forgive me, Madame; it is not myself; it is the Grand Duchess"— alluding to the portrait. This ingenious way of avoiding the difficulty was much admired by the bystanders.

The Queen asked the Baroness to speak German, that she might see whether she had entirely forgotten the language. Madame d'Oberkirch obeyed, and the Queen remained thoughtful for a moment. "Yes," she then said, "I am glad to hear again the old Deutsch; it is a fine language—but French!—when spoken by my children, it seems to me the sweetest language in the world!"

Monsieur de Maurepas died shortly after the birth of the Dauphin, and all the Polignac party began to intrigue to obtain the nomination of Monsieur de Calonne as comptroller of the finances, the most important post in the government, on account of the complicated and disastrous condition of the state funds. This most unfortunate choice was against the Queen's wish; but she bore the responsibility in the sight of the nation, and when the consequences of the unprincipled mismanagement of the minister became evident, the hatred against the Queen became more and more apparent.

The birth of the Duke of Normandy, which, by securing the succession to the crown, would at other times have caused great rejoicings, brought her full proof of the unfortunate change in public opinion.

The King, who was considered to be economical, and who wrote down his private expenses to the last farthing, was yet, according to the familiar saying, "penny wise and pound foolish." He saved in trifles and spent large sums freely, unrestrained by Calonne, who was too much of a courtier to object

or to remind him of the condition of the state coffers, which did not possess the faculty of self-replenishment, like the purse of Fortunatus.

The King purchased the estate of Rambouillet merely to procure for himself an increase of hunting- and shooting-grounds; he purchased St. Cloud from the Duc d'Orléans, which he gave to Marie-Antoinette for the sake of the grounds to be used for the royal children, as if they had not sufficient palaces already! Repairs were intended at Versailles, which it might become necessary to leave temporarily. The Revolution prevented the execution of all such plans; but meanwhile St. Cloud was bought, at a cost of many millions of francs.

The financial catastrophe of the Prince de Guéménée had obliged the Princess to sell a house with beautiful grounds which she possessed at Montreuil, a suburb of Versailles. This the King bought for Madame Elisabeth; it was to be her "Trianon," but she was not to sleep there till she had reached the age of twenty-five. The Revolution broke out before then. Nevertheless Madame Elisabeth went daily to Montreuil, where, in imitation of Marie-Antoinette, she established Swiss cows and a dairy, which was principally to be used for the poor children of the neighborhood. But the young Swiss cow-keeper and dairyman, Jacques, seemed sad. What was the matter? Why was he unhappy? Jacques confessed that he had left his betrothed in his native mountains, and that he could not be comforted without

her. Of course this difficulty was soon settled, and Jacques was happily married to his love, who took charge of the dairy.

Virtue, cows, and Swiss lovers,—here was enough to excite universal interest in that sentimental age; and a pretty song called "Pauvre Jacques" became highly fashionable in aristocratic circles.

But although Montreuil was forgiven to Madame Elisabeth, St. Cloud was not forgiven to the Queen, who became more and more unpopular. When, after the birth of the Duke of Normandy, she went to Paris for her thanksgiving service, the coldness with which she was received caused her the most painful surprise. She had wished to have the Dauphin with her, and his presence would probably have propitiated the crowd; but "Madame" (the Comtesse de Provence) would accept no seat in the carriage but the one next the Queen, and the Dauphin could have no other, having precedence over "Madame." Consequently, Marie-Antoinette could not take her son with her; and wherever she went during the ceremonies of the day, she was received in dead silence. On reaching the Tuileries, she would not see the courtiers assembled to meet her, but quickly going up a back staircase to the rooms prepared for her reception, followed by Madame Elisabeth, she burst into tears, repeating: "But what have I done to them? What have I done?"

When she appeared at St. Cloud matters were still worse; there were loud cries for the King and the

ARMAND GASTON, CARDINAL DE ROHAN.

AFTER RIGAUD, IN MUSEUM OF VERSAILLES.

Dauphin, dead silence for the Queen. When the waters of the park played, the populace habitually said: "We are going to St. Cloud to see the fountains and *the Austrian*."

The Queen had hoped that the bad management of Calonne would enable her to obtain the recall of Choiseul, but he died shortly after the birth of the Queen's second son, which she had herself announced to him in a gracious letter.

Her mother was gone; Choiseul was gone; she was beginning to understand the real value of the Polignac friendship, and the price that she would have to pay for all that she had showered so blindly upon those who only sought for what she had to give.

But an unforeseen and crushing blow was about to fall upon her.

CHAPTER X

A wonderful necklace — Generosity of Louis XVI refused by Marie-Antoinette — An unworthy prelate — An adventuress connected with the reigning family of France — A cardinal duped — A moonlight scene in the park of Versailles — Gift of a rose — An extraordinary resemblance — Forged letters of the Queen — A prelate arrested in his pontifical robes — A trial concerning the highest nobility of France — Indignation of the Queen at the verdict — What was the truth?

THE extraordinary intrigue known as the affair of "The Queen's Necklace" is extremely complicated in its details. It will be remembered that the court jewelers, Boehmer and Bassange, had already induced the Queen to make imprudent purchases of diamonds, to be paid by instalments, much to the displeasure of the Empress Maria Theresa and the anxiety of Mercy. Encouraged by this success, Boehmer had spent several years in collecting the most perfect diamonds that could be found, which he set in a marvelous necklace of several rows, perfectly unique of its kind. This necklace, for which he asked 1,600,000 francs,[1] was submitted to the King's approval. Louis XVI was delighted with the splendid jewels, and, notwithstanding the enor-

[1] About $320,000. It must not be forgotten that this sum represented a much larger amount at that time than in the present day.

mous price, was inclined to present them to the Queen. But Marie-Antoinette, who had learned prudence and moderation with riper years, replied that she could not consent to the expenditure of such a large sum for such a purpose; that she had enough diamonds for all occasions; and that the sum would be far better employed in building a ship of war.

The jeweler showed the most desperate distress at this refusal, and again and again vainly sought to persuade the Queen, who was resolute in her refusal. He tried to offer the necklace to all the courts of Europe, but everywhere the high price caused rejection. His whole fortune was compromised in this venture, and yet he could not bear the thought of dividing such a *chef-d'œuvre*, and thus destroying its merit, although there seemed to be no other resource. He determined to make one more effort, and having obtained an audience of the Queen, he threw himself on his knees before her, with the most vehement protestations, declaring that he was a ruined man, that he would be dishonored, and that if she did not help him he had no resource but putting an end to his life. The Queen with some anger replied that as she had not ordered the necklace, she could not be responsible for his misfortunes; that she had refused it when the King offered to give it to her; and that she would hear no more about it; that she was much displeased at having had to endure such a scene.

Some time afterward the Queen was told that Boehmer was making fresh attempts to sell his necklace, and she desired Madame Campan to ask him what its fate had been. Madame Campan, having met Boehmer, made the inquiry, and was told that he had been so fortunate as to sell it at Constantinople for the use of the favorite Sultana.

The Queen expressed great pleasure on hearing the news, and thought no more of the necklace.

But meanwhile a disastrous intrigue was brewing in the dark, of which the Queen could have no suspicion.

The "Great Almoner" of France, who had the highest position in the King's chapel, was at that time the Cardinal Prince de Rohan, who owed his high dignity in the church to his illustrious name and the influence of his powerful family, rather than to his very deficient virtues.

Although a cardinal, a bishop, a priest, the Prince de Rohan had nothing clerical appertaining to him beyond the splendor of his pontifical robes, the priceless lace of his rochets, and the gems which adorned his ecclesiastical insignia. His life was far from being exemplary, and his tastes were luxurious to excess; so that notwithstanding his large revenues he was constantly in debt and difficulty. He had a palace at Saverne, where he lived in splendor, and a house of great magnificence in Paris, where he spent a portion of the year.

Of noble appearance, a gentleman from head to

foot, with fascinating manners and attractive conversation, the Cardinal de Rohan had every advantage that could be attributed to a princely courtier of the time, but nothing of what should characterize a priest.

Rohan had been ambassador at Vienna for some time, and had given infinite trouble to Maria Theresa, who, in every letter, complains bitterly of his extravagance, his licentious conduct, his intrigues and double-dealing. At length, she was so utterly tired of having at her court such a perpetual source of scandal, that she insisted on his recall, which was effected in a great measure through the influence of Marie-Antoinette. As Dauphine she had been deeply offended by Rohan, who, in a pungently witty letter addressed to the Duc d'Aiguillon, had caricatured the conduct of Maria Theresa at the time of the division of Poland. This letter had been given by d'Aiguillon to Madame du Barry, who had read it aloud, amid peals of laughter, to the guests at one of her suppers.

This sort of offense, attended by an insult to her mother, was never forgotten or forgiven by Marie-Antoinette. We have seen how she dismissed d'Aiguillon when she became queen; she also obtained the recall of Rohan, but she could not prevent him from obtaining the appointment of Great Almoner to the crown through the influence of his family, who must not be offended.

Nevertheless, Marie-Antoinette perpetually made

him feel her displeasure by treating him with a marked degree of coldness, which caused deep humiliation to the ambitious prelate, who dreamed of governing the country as prime minister, and sooner or later playing the part of a Richelieu.

He felt that the enmity of the Queen would prevent this unless he could find some means of ingratiating himself with her; but hitherto every attempt had proved fruitless. The Queen spoke to him only on ceremonious occasions, and limited all access to the court on his part to his official duties. She had even excluded him from the gardens of Trianon when they were illuminated in honor of the Grand Duke Paul. One of the keepers who was induced to admit him was punished, and would have been dismissed if the intercession of protectors had not determined Marie-Antoinette to show indulgence.

The aversion of the Queen was deeply galling to the Cardinal's pride; his vanity was also vexed by the contemptuous indifference of a pretty woman, which he could hardly believe to be sincere. The age was one of high-flown romance; the Cardinal de Rohan was unprincipled, sentimental, and disposed to credulity.

His interest was roused by a visit that he received from a young and attractive woman calling herself the Comtesse de La Motte-Valois, and claiming to be a lineal descendant of Henry II, King of France. Her claims had been admitted by the court genealogist, and the papers that she showed were authentic;

she was really the lineal descendant of Henry II, but, as may be supposed, by a natural son. The family had been reduced to the greatest poverty, and lived as peasants with their four children. One day, as the little Jeanne, with the assistance of one of her sisters, was carrying a bundle of dry sticks for the fire of their wretched cottage, she was noticed by the Marquise de Boulainvilliers, who, on hearing her history from the curé of the parish, was interested in the child, and had the three little girls educated in a school at Passy. The boy was prepared for the navy, and through the influence of the kind benefactress the King granted a pension of eight hundred francs to each child. Jeanne was then taken as a sort of companion by a Madame de Surmont at Bar-sur-Aube. There she met the Comte de La Motte, who belonged to a regiment of gendarmerie, in which at that time the privates held the position of gentlemen and ranked as officers. Although he was as poor as herself, the Comte de La Motte was induced to marry her; and in 1782 the pair of adventurers came to Paris, where they lived in poverty and debt, selling and pawning what they had, even to their clothes. In the beginning of 1784 Madame de La Motte thought of imploring the pity of the Cardinal de Rohan, and of inducing him to present a petition to the King. Madame de La Motte was pretty, insinuating, coquettish. The Cardinal was captivated and was much interested in the miserable situation of a descendant of the royal Valois.

He advised Madame de La Motte to apply to the Queen, at the same time expressing his regret at his inability to assist her in this, and betraying his own bitter feelings with regard to the persistent aversion shown to him by Marie-Antoinette. Madame de La Motte, who was a perfect demon of intrigue, at once saw the weak point, and determined to make use of it. She never succeeded in obtaining admission to the Queen, but was received by "Madame" (Comtesse de Provence), whose intercession obtained the grant of a small pension.

Madame de La Motte, however, persuaded the Cardinal that she had been received several times by the Queen, who had treated her with the greatest kindness, and not only had shown her the warmest interest, but had evidently taken a great fancy to her, and had written to her confidentially.

These letters, fabricated by an accomplice called Rétaux de Villette, ought to have awakened the Cardinal's suspicions; but he was fascinated, infatuated. Madame de La Motte told the Cardinal that she had spoken of him to the Queen; that she had succeeded in removing unfavorable impressions; and that the Queen had desired her to request him to write his justification and transmit it to her. The Cardinal, delighted, drew up an elaborate explanation of his conduct, which Madame de La Motte undertook to give into the Queen's hands. A few days later she brought a note which was said to come from the Queen, whose handwriting had been imitated, in

COMTESSE DE LA MOTTE.

which she expressed her satisfaction at his explanation, and promised to inform him when she saw the possibility of granting him a private audience. The note concluded with the significant words: "Be discreet."

A supposed correspondence now began between the Queen and the Cardinal. The forged letters constantly expressed need of money for different purposes. The Cardinal, utterly blind in his confidence, hastened to send the sums required, and Madame de La Motte thus pocketed 120,000 livres!

With all his infatuation, however, the Cardinal was beginning to express surprise at the contrast between the graciously affectionate letters purporting to come from the Queen and the haughty coldness of her demeanor whenever his duties called him into her presence. Madame de La Motte had an explanation always ready; but nevertheless the Cardinal began to be troubled in his mind, and Madame de La Motte saw that some new piece of trickery must be devised to dispel vague doubts which might develop into suspicion.

Her husband and accomplice, La Motte, while walking in the Palais Royal garden, had noticed a young woman whose face and figure recalled the Queen in a marked manner. He easily discovered that she was a person of bad reputation, named d'Oliva, who lived in a poor lodging near the church of St. Eustache. He followed her, visited her, and finally announced that a lady of rank, a countess,

who had heard of her, would call on her the next day.

Madame de La Motte appeared, and had no difficulty in imposing upon the poor girl. She showed her the Queen's supposed letters; spoke of her Majesty's entire confidence in herself (Madame de La Motte); and stated that she had the duty of discovering some one who would undertake a mission the nature of which would be explained in due time. Madame de La Motte had thought that Mademoiselle d'Oliva would be the very person required for this task, and if she would perform it she would receive 15,000 livres from Madame de La Motte and a present of much greater value from the Queen.

Mademoiselle d'Oliva was not scrupulous, and felt only great delight at such good fortune, professing her willingness to do anything that was required.

The next day Madame de La Motte took her to a small inn at Versailles, where she dressed her in a white gown and arranged her hair with a white lace handkerchief such as the Queen wore. She then gave her instructions. Mademoiselle d'Oliva was to follow Madame de La Motte that evening at a late hour to the park of Versailles; there she was to go into a "bosquet"[1] which would be shown to her. She would see a tall man in a long, dark-gray coat come toward her; she would then give him a box

[1] In the park of Versailles are a number of small inclosed gardens, or shrubberies, called "bosquets."

with the Queen's portrait and a rose; adding in a low voice, "You know what this means."

Mademoiselle d'Oliva, confidently believing that the whole scene was some jest or theatrical play got up by the Queen, had only one thought — to act her part in a satisfactory manner.

Meanwhile, Madame de La Motte had told the Cardinal that the Queen would see him that evening in one of the bosquets,[1] which would be shown to him in due time.

At the appointed hour the Cardinal, in anxious expectation, went on the terrace; after waiting for some time, Madame de La Motte, wearing a black domino, came hastily toward him, saying that the Queen was much vexed; that the princesses, her sisters-in-law, had offered to accompany her; but that nevertheless she would try to escape for a moment, and, short as the time must be, she would give him proofs of her good will. Madame de La Motte then directed him to the bosquet where Mademoiselle d'Oliva was stationed.

The hour was late, the night was dark, and the Cardinal could see only a shadowy figure in a white dress moving toward him. The height and appearance seemed to be those of the Queen. The Cardinal bowed low, while the figure, coming near to him, held out a rose and a small box, with the mur-

1 Opinions are divided as to which bosquet was used for this scene. Some suppose it was the one known as "Les Bains d'Apollon," others say "Le bosquet de la Reine."

mured words: "You know what this means." Immediately Madame de La Motte came up in haste. "Quick! quick!" she cried, "here comes 'Madame' with the Comtesse d'Artois!" The white figure flitted away, and the Cardinal was convinced that he had seen the Queen, whose portrait was on the box. This scene took place on July 28, 1784.

In a short time Madame de La Motte brought the Cardinal more letters, which were said to come from the Queen, in which she asked for 150,000 livres for people in whom she took an interest. The Cardinal immediately sent the sum; and the audacious adventuress then went to Bar-sur-Aube, where she astonished all those who had witnessed her penury by her display of wealth and luxury.

But all this was only the prologue to her great plan — the appropriation to herself of the famous necklace of which all the world talked, and at the same time of the reward promised by the jewelers to any one who would procure its sale.

On January 21, 1785, Madame de La Motte, who now played the "grande dame," told Boehmer's partner that the Queen had a great longing for the necklace, but that she did not wish to treat with the jewelers in a direct manner, and would employ the good offices of an illustrious personage as negotiator. Of course this illustrious nobleman was the Cardinal de Rohan, whom Madame de La Motte had persuaded by forged letters to believe that the Queen wished to buy the necklace unknown to the

King, and would pay for it by instalments out of her own funds; and that, wishing to give the Cardinal a striking proof of her friendly feelings toward him, she had appointed him to negotiate the matter for her. He would receive an authorization to act for the Queen, written and signed by her own hand, which would be a sufficient guarantee.

The Cardinal did not lose a moment in his desire to satisfy the Queen, and on the 29th of January the agreement was drawn up between the Cardinal and the jewelers for the sale of the necklace: the price—1,600,000 livres—to be paid in four instalments, in four periods of four months each.

On the 31st of January the jewelers returned to the Cardinal, who showed them the contract with the word, "Approuvé," and the signature, "Marie-Antoinette de France," both, of course, forged by the habitual accomplice of Madame de La Motte—Rétaux de Villette.

This signature alone ought to have roused the Cardinal's suspicions. Although the jewelers might be excused for ignorance of court usage, a man of the Cardinal's rank must have known that queens, and even royal princesses, only sign their Christian names, without any addition. At all events, an archduchess of Austria could not be supposed to sign "de France." The blindness and infatuation of the unfortunate Cardinal are perfectly inconceivable.

The jewelers, in great joy and with full confidence, gave the necklace into the hands of the Car-

dinal, who on February 1, 1785, took it to the small lodging which Madame de La Motte occupied in Place Dauphine[1] at Versailles (for her display of wealth was made elsewhere). The Cardinal had just given the jewel-case into her hands when the Queen's confidential servant was announced. Madame de La Motte requested the Cardinal to go behind a door with glass panes, through which he could see what took place. A loud voice cried in a tone of authority, "From the Queen!" A man wearing her livery appeared; Madame de La Motte, with every sign of deference, gave the jewel-case into his hands, and he immediately retired. This man was no other than Rétaux de Villette, the accomplice of the La Motte couple, and the robbery was now accomplished!

The necklace was broken up, and the stones were sold separately in England, as M. Campardon, in his exhaustive work on the "The Queen's Necklace," has abundantly proved by documents of undoubted authenticity.

The 30th of July had been appointed for the payment of the first instalment of the purchase money. The Queen gave no sign, and the jewelers noticed with alarm that she never wore the necklace. They determined to remind her of the fatal date, and Boehmer took an opportunity of presenting to the Queen a petition as she came out of the chapel after mass. The Queen then read, with great surprise,

[1] Now called Place Hoche.

the jeweler's respectful congratulations on her being now "in possession of the most beautiful diamonds in Europe," with the hope that she would "not forget him."

"What can he mean? The man must be mad!" was the remark that she made to Madame Campan, as she read the petition aloud in her private library.

Madame Campan received orders to summon Boehmer and clear up the matter, which she hastened to do, in her own private house, as she had finished her time of waiting on the Queen.

Boehmer then told her that his accounts had not been settled as she supposed, and that a large sum was still due to him, as the Queen had secretly purchased his necklace; but that he had received orders to say that it had been sold at Constantinople for the Sultana.

The whole story of the Cardinal de Rohan and the papers signed by the Queen was revealed to Madame Campan, who advised Boehmer to relate all to one of the ministers, the Baron de Breteuil, who had charge of the crown diamonds. Instead of following this sensible advice, he asked an audience of the Queen, which she refused till the whole matter was revealed to her by Madame Campan. She then sent for Boehmer and demanded a full explanation. It was in vain that with intense astonishment and indignation she declared that the whole was a piece of duplicity with which she had nothing to do. The jeweler repeated: "Madame, it is impossible to

continue any further mystery. Please to acknowledge that you have my necklace, and come to my assistance, or my bankruptcy will make everything public."

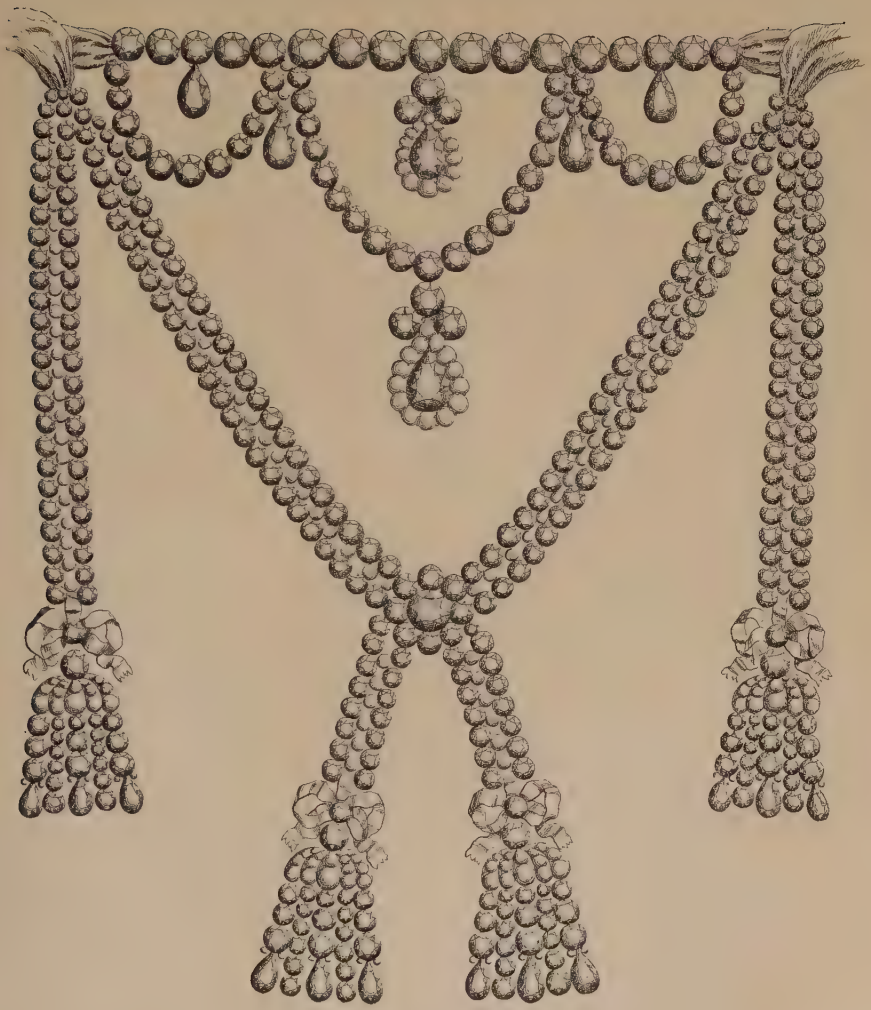
When Boehmer had left her, the Queen was in a state of violent agitation, and she sent immediately for the Abbé de Vermond and the Baron de Breteuil. Both were personal enemies of the Cardinal, and their indignation increased that which was felt by the Queen. There is no mention of Mercy, who was probably absent, but whose wary prudence might have prevented hasty measures. The Queen was extremely excited, declaring vehemently that all France and all Europe should know the truth, and that rank and titles should not serve to conceal vices; that she would have the Cardinal who had dared to compromise his sovereign's wife publicly unmasked. Madame Campan, much alarmed at her agitation, entreated her not to act hastily, but to take the surest advice. She was, however, silenced.

The following Sunday was a great feast of the Catholic Church — the Assumption (August 15). The Cardinal, wearing his pontifical robes, was about to go to the chapel when he was summoned into the King's presence, in his private room, where he found the King, the Queen, and three of the ministers.

The King at once addressed him:

"Have you bought diamonds from Boehmer?"

"Yes, sire."



DIAMOND NECKLACE.

One Third Original Size.

FROM AN ENGRAVING BY PERMISSION OF PLON, NOURRIT ET CIE.

"What have you done with them?"

"I thought they had been transmitted to the Queen."

"Who gave you such a commission?"

"A lady called the Comtesse de La Motte-Valois, who presented to me a letter from the Queen, and I thought to obey the Queen's pleasure in undertaking the negotiation."

The Queen, who was nervously toying with her fan, here interrupted him, asking how he could possibly suppose that after eight years, during which time she had constantly avoided even speaking to him, she should choose him for such a negotiation?

The Cardinal, utterly abashed, then said: "I see that I have been most painfully deceived. I will pay for the necklace. My wish to please your Majesty fascinated me; I saw no trickery, and I am grieved."

He then drew from a pocket-book a supposed letter from the Queen to Madame de La Motte.

The King took the letter, and after looking at it exclaimed: "This is neither the Queen's handwriting nor her signature. How is it possible that a prince of the house of Rohan, the Great Almoner of the crown, should not know that queens sign only their Christian names, or suppose that the Queen would sign, 'Marie-Antoinette de France'?"

The Cardinal seemed thunderstruck; he turned pale, and repeated several times: "I have been deceived, sire; I will pay for the necklace; I beg pardon of both your Majesties."

The King said: "I wish for your justification; I do not want to find you guilty. Explain to me the meaning of all this negotiation with Boehmer, these assurances, these letters."

The Cardinal, greatly agitated, seemed as if he could not stand, and holding by a table, as if he feared to fall, he said falteringly: "Sire, I am too much moved to be able to answer your Majesty properly."

The King desired him to go into an inner room, where he would find writing-materials, and there to write his justification. In a few minutes he reappeared with a paper containing a few incomprehensible lines.

The King then said: "You may retire, but you will be arrested on leaving this room."

The Cardinal then replied in earnest supplication: "Sire, I will always obey the King's orders, but I entreat your Majesty to spare me the humiliation of being arrested before the whole court and wearing my pontifical robes."

"It must be," said Louis XVI; "it is my duty as a husband and a king."

The Cardinal left the room in consternation, and as he passed into the great "Galerie des Glaces," or Hall of Mirrors, where the courtiers were assembled to follow the King and Queen to the mass in the chapel, the Baron de Breteuil exclaimed in a loud voice: "By order of the King! Arrest the Cardinal de Rohan!"

A young lieutenant of the guards stepped forward, amid the general astonishment, and was followed by the Cardinal, who had recovered his presence of mind and majestic demeanor. He walked down the long gallery, through the rows of amazed courtiers; but on leaving it, he saw his servant, to whom he spoke hastily in German; then, turning to the young officer, he asked him for a pencil. The young man, who was awe-struck at his mission, thoughtlessly gave the pencil; the Cardinal wrote a few words on a leaf of his pocket-book, which he gave to the servant. This was an order to his private secretary to burn all his papers, which was done immediately before they could be seized by the lieutenant of police, who came too late.

The first impression of both the King and Queen had been that the Cardinal had used the Queen's name to appropriate the necklace for his own purposes and the payment of his own debts. This, as we have seen, was a mistake; the Cardinal had been foolish and credulous, but in no wise dishonest. The Prime Minister, Vergennes, more prudent than the Queen's too zealous advisers, had urged the wisdom of clearing up the matter thoroughly before proceeding to extreme measures; but the Queen was too angry to temporize; the King was equally indignant, and much moved by her tears and her distress.

The Cardinal was taken to the Bastille, where every mark of consideration was shown to him. Madame de La Motte was arrested at Bar-sur-Aube;

her husband managed to escape to England; Rétaux de Villette tried to cross the frontier, but was caught on French ground and taken to the Bastille. Not a word was as yet known of the supposed correspondence between the Cardinal and the Queen, nor of the episode of Mademoiselle d'Oliva. The answers of the various culprits when questioned, however, caused the arrest of the latter. The King had given the Cardinal the choice of abiding by his sovereign will and pleasure, or of accepting a trial in Parliament. He chose the latter.

The greater number of contemporary writers blame the court for having allowed the trial, where the Queen's name would be bandied from one to another, and assert that the affair ought to have been hushed up on the promise of the Cardinal to pay the jewelers. But modern writers object that calumny would then have fastened on the Queen, who would have had no means of justification; whereas her complete innocence and unconsciousness were proved without possibility of doubt, in the course of the proceedings, by the confessions of Rétaux de Villette, who pleaded guilty as to the forgeries of the letters and the signature, "Marie-Antoinette de France"; and of Mademoiselle d'Oliva, who related the whole scene of the bosquet. Meanwhile, the Prince de Condé, who had married a princess of Rohan, and all the members of that family, saw only an insult to their name in the arrest and attainder for high treason of the Cardinal de Rohan, while the greater part

of the nobility and clergy took the same view. When the trial began all the princes and princesses of Rohan, dressed in deep mourning, stood in the hall through which the judges and advocates must pass. The excitement in the general world was intense, and animosity toward the Queen was the prevailing feeling.

The sentence was anxiously expected, and the complete acquittal of the Cardinal was hailed with universal joy. The following is a summary of the result of the trial with the various headings:

The Cardinal was declared not guilty.

The letters and signatures of the Queen were proved to be forgeries.

Rétaux de Villette was banished from the kingdom.

Mademoiselle d'Oliva was dismissed.

The Comte de La Motte was sentenced, by default, to the galleys.

The Comtesse de La Motte was sentenced to be publicly whipped, to be branded with the letter *V*[1] on both shoulders, and to be imprisoned for life.

The acquittal of the Cardinal was considered by the Queen to be a personal insult to herself, and she received the intelligence with floods of tears. Most of the royalist writers take the same view.

And yet, if the matter be examined with cool impartiality, it was only an act of justice to acquit the Cardinal. He had been a foolish, presumptuous dupe—but still a dupe; he had firmly believed that

[1] *Voleuse* (thief).

he was acting according to the Queen's orders, and that he had seen her during the night scene in the bosquet. He had been guilty of no dishonesty, and had taken no pecuniary advantage to himself. And, alas! the Queen had often been guilty of such acts of imprudence as to justify, in some degree, his credulity in this instance.

That the Queen should feel outraged and insulted by the supposition of the scene in the bosquet was only natural; but there was nothing here that came within the jurisdiction of a court of justice. That the Cardinal should have believed that the Queen, who had never concealed her dislike for him, had consented to a moonlight flirtation in the park of Versailles was absurd and presumptuous; no one could blame the Queen for showing resentment; but there was here no misdemeanor amenable to the law of the land.

As for the wretched woman who had been the prime mover in the wicked conspiracy, her punishment was certainly sufficiently severe. The sentence was not carried out without great difficulty; the struggles and convulsions of the unhappy creature were awful to witness.

Some months later she managed to escape from the Salpêtrière prison, and joined her husband in London, where she wrote infamous libels against the Queen which professed to be her own justification.

The King required of the Cardinal to send in his resignation of the post of Great Almoner, and to retire from the court. He spent some time at the

Abbey of Marmoutier, near Tours; then returned to his episcopal town of Strasburg, where he seems to have led a reformed life. During the Revolution he crossed the Rhine and remained in that portion of the diocese which was on the German side. He behaved with noble generosity to all the *émigrés* who were in need of assistance, and redeemed the past by showing many unsuspected virtues. He made a thoroughly Christian end in 1803.

CHAPTER XI

The last theatrical performance at Trianon — The Queen now entirely devoted to her children — She perseveres unfortunately in her Austrian policy — Her amiable disposition — The old keeper at Trianon — Madame Vigée-Lebrun, the artist — The beauty of the Queen — Anecdotes — Affectionate intercourse with Madame Elisabeth — Death of the little Princesse Sophie — Strange prophecy of Cazotte — Painting by Madame Lebrun — Alarming condition of the Dauphin — Political difficulties and complications.

THE theater of Trianon was preparing the play of the "Barber of Seville"[1] at the very time of the Cardinal's sudden arrest. The play was acted four days later, the Queen performing *Rosina*. The invitations had been unusually extended in consequence of the flattery of the few who had been previously admitted, but this was the last performance at Trianon.

Henceforward the Queen would have no time for such amusements, and her mind would be engrossed by other cares — the Revolution was looming in the future!

But immediately after the trial she dreamed only of driving away thought. Mercy notes that the stay at Fontainebleau which followed was not less "dissipated" than the preceding visits.

[1] From which Rossini took the subject of his celebrated opera.

Marie-Antoinette was now thirty, and yet Mercy still speaks of her ignorance and of her disgust for all serious matters. Nevertheless she persisted in her interference when, more than ever, she should have tried to disappear from notice. She continued her unfortunate Austrian policy, which had already caused so much mischief. She had warmly taken the part of her sister Caroline, Queen of Naples, who was godmother to her second son, but whose life was noted for its publicly scandalous incidents. Caroline had sacrificed her husband's kingdom to Austria, and the Cardinal de Bernis, French envoy at Rome, wrote to the Prime Minister, Vergennes, to "take care lest Europe should suspect that the Austrian influence was as predominant at Versailles as at Naples."

Unhappily, her brother, Joseph II, was engaged in a war against Holland, and Marie-Antoinette passionately took his part, trying to induce France to act with him as a consequence of the alliance. Neither the King nor the ministers wished to do so; but the Queen was under pressure from her brother, and from Mercy, acting in his name. She earnestly pleaded for the coöperation of French troops; but the ministers did not see why French blood should be shed and French lives sacrificed for the sole benefit of Austria.

"Madame, I am speaking to the mother of the Dauphin, and not to the sister of the Emperor," said Vergennes resolutely.

There was a violent scene in the King's presence until Vergennes tendered his resignation on the spot. The struggle continued for many months, and produced the worst possible impression outside of the court. Vergennes, as a compromise, sent fifteen millions of livres to the Emperor, but refused troops. This sum was immensely exaggerated, and the Queen was accused of "ruining France" to send money to her brother; whereas she had wished for troops, not money. She was incessantly led to interfere by those who were her most trusted advisers, notwithstanding her own unwillingness and her aversion for political questions. She was reproached for frivolity, and was induced to believe that she was shrinking from a duty when she tried to avoid playing a part for which she was unfitted by nature, and for which nothing in her education or previous habits had prepared her. Although extremely intelligent, she possessed but little general information; her mind had not been cultivated; she was influenced principally by her affections and by her vivid imagination.

The political interference of women, especially when prompted and guided by a foreign nation, is at *all times* so unpopular in France that the continuance of her past acts of frivolity would have caused less mischief; and this was the more to be regretted as in other respects the Queen was now free from anything deserving blame or even criticism.

After the first reaction or bravado following the great humiliation of the necklace, Marie-Antoinette

became engrossed with her children and her maternal duties, which she performed in the most exemplary manner. She was present at the lessons of their teachers, although they were necessarily tedious, being only elementary; she herself examined their tasks, and made them repeat what they had to learn. She consented to retrenchments and reforms in her household; she avoided high play and games of mere chance; she was less exclusive in her friendships. Her intimacy, even with Madame de Polignac, had cooled considerably; she had reason to complain of the political opinions and style of many of the habitual guests of her friend; and for other but no less stringent causes she objected to the incessant presence of Monsieur de Vaudreuil, whom she personally disliked, and whose intimacy with Madame de Polignac she disapproved of as a cause of public scandal. But when the Queen expressed her displeasure at the society which she met in Madame de Polignac's apartments, the Duchess coolly answered: "Because your Majesty honors me with your presence, there is surely no reason to exclude my friends."

This speech was tolerably insolent, as Madame de Polignac owed everything, and far more than ought to have been, to the Queen's kindness and direct interference. The Queen was deeply wounded, but wished to avoid all public gossip and scandal; so she silently and quietly withdrew from society in which she could find no further pleasure. From time to

time she sent to ask for the names of the persons assembled; when they were satisfactory she appeared for a short time, or abstained, according to circumstances.

She now more generally spent the evening with the Comtesse d'Ossun, her *dame d'atour*, or "keeper of the robes." Here she found far more deference and respect and more disinterested proceedings; her excessive kindness was not preyed upon, as had been the case with the Polignac party. A sort of reaction in favor of the Princesse de Lamballe took place, and the Queen wrote to her affectionately. But the Princess had now directed her life in another line, and was entirely devoted to her father-in-law, the Duc de Penthièvre, coming to Versailles only when summoned by her official duties. But when the hour of need and danger came the Princesse de Lamballe left everything to go to the Queen, for whom she laid down her life without hesitation or even a moment of selfish fear.

The Queen took the royal children to St. Cloud and Trianon, where she tried to propitiate her adversaries by allowing free access to the gardens on Sundays. There was dancing under a tent, and all decently dressed persons, even of the lower class, were admitted. Children were particularly welcome; she spoke to them with the greatest kindness, and also to their nurses, encouraging their games, and seeming to share their enjoyment. The writer of these pages well remembers an old keeper of Trianon

who had known Marie-Antoinette and loved to speak of her. He had been a choir-boy in her chapel, and she often stopped to say a passing word to him and give him sweets. He said of her, using a familiar French locution: "Elle était bonne — comme du bon pain."[1]

The haughtiness which was so generally attributed to Marie-Antoinette was only apparent, except when she wished to show displeasure. At other times the impression was due only to the manner in which she carried her head, and the majesty of her demeanor; for in her habitual intercourse she was only too unpretending, and indifferent to the marks of respect which were due to her, and which she too easily overlooked.

About this time Madame Vigée-Lebrun, the celebrated artist, was appointed to paint several portraits of the Queen, which contemporaries declare to be the best likenesses taken of her.

Madame Lebrun describes her as tall, with an admirable figure rather fully developed, though without excess; and beautiful arms, hands, and feet. No woman in France walked so gracefully as the Queen; she carried her head high, with a majesty which distinguished her as the sovereign in the midst of all her court, and yet without diminishing the impression of sweet kindness in her whole demeanor. She adds that it is very difficult to give to those who have not seen the Queen an idea of so much grace and dignity

[1] "She was good — like good bread."

combined. One day she was expressing her admiration of the majesty which was so remarkable in the Queen's whole demeanor, upon which Marie-Antoinette quickly answered, as if from some painful recollection: "If I were not a queen, people would say that I have an insolent air, would they not?" Madame Lebrun does not hesitate to allow that the features were not classically regular, and that they were even in some respects defective. But the whole was so attractive and so fascinating that the details escaped criticism. The brilliancy of her complexion she describes as unequaled; the skin was so delicately transparent that it did not take shade.

Madame Lebrun was in a delicate state of health at this time, and on one occasion, when the Queen was to have given her a sitting, she was not well enough to go to Versailles. The next day she hastened there with the intention to explain and apologize, but was ungraciously received by one of the officials, who said stiffly:

"Her Majesty expected you yesterday, madame; to-day she is going out for a drive, and cannot receive you."

The carriages were waiting in the courtyard of the palace, and Madame Lebrun, exceedingly frightened, entreated to be allowed to seek at least the Queen's pardon. Finally she was shown into the Queen's private apartments, where she found Marie-Antoinette preparing for her drive while hearing the little Princess repeat her lesson.

"Oh, Madame Lebrun!" exclaimed the Queen. "Why, I expected you yesterday!"

"Alas! Madame," answered the artist, "I was so ill that it was impossible for me to come. I now seek your Majesty's forgiveness, and await the Queen's orders."

"You must not have the fatigue to no purpose," said the Queen quickly, with her characteristic kindness. "Send away the carriages! We will have the sitting."

Madame Lebrun, overpowered with nervousness and gratitude, began to prepare her easel and paint-box, but in her agitation she dropped the latter, and the brushes were scattered over the floor.

"Oh, you must not stoop down!" cried the Queen; and, kneeling herself, she gathered up what had fallen.

Such was Marie-Antoinette, always kind, always considerate to others. And this was the woman, so maligned, so calumniated, whom popular opinion, worked upon by infamous libels, supposed to be capable of every crime!

The death of Vergennes, and the nomination of Loménie de Brienne, Archbishop of Sens, as Prime Minister, increased the unpopularity of the Queen, who, through the influence of the Abbé de Vermond and what was called "the Austrian party," had been induced to persuade the King to make this choice. This was publicly known; consequently she was held responsible for all his errors; and as he constantly

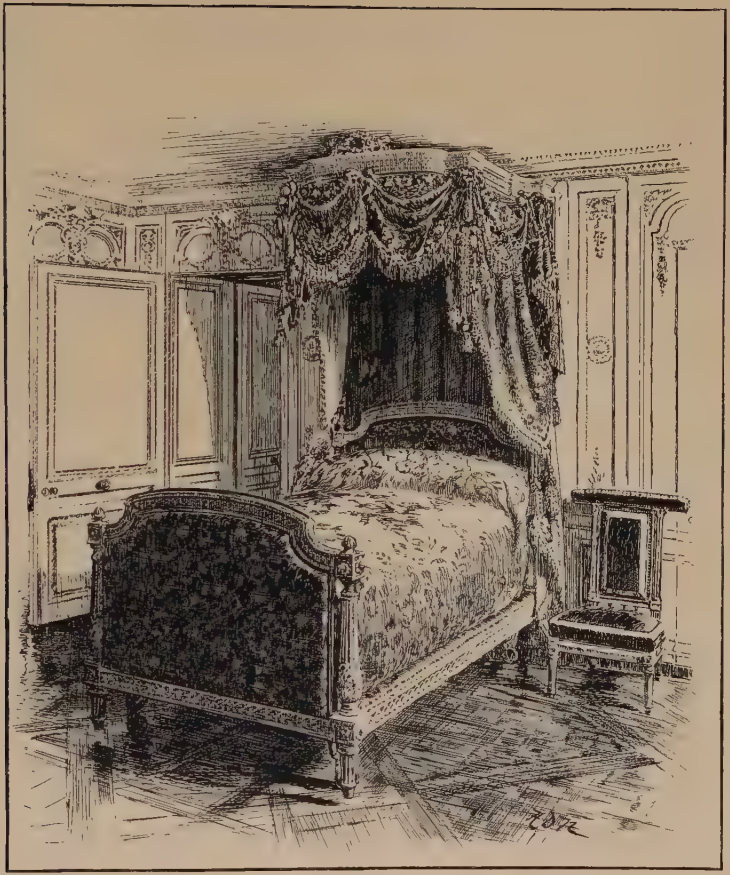
consulted her with courtier-like deference for her views, there was a general cry, "The Queen governs!"

Meanwhile a great grief was in store for her—the death of her youngest child, the little Princesse Sophie, at the age of eleven months; and, in addition, the delicate health of the Dauphin caused her great anxiety. The Queen took refuge at Trianon to indulge in her grief more freely; but she called to her Madame Elisabeth, whom she had learned to know and love. She wrote to her sister-in-law:

"We shall weep together over the death of my poor little angel. I need all your heart to comfort mine."[1]

It would have been well for Marie-Antoinette if she had never had any intimate friend but the Princesse Elisabeth. Unhappily, the difference in age had long kept them asunder; but now the Queen was beginning to recognize the admirable character of the young girl, who developed into one of the most perfect beings known to frail humanity. She became the comfort and support of the whole royal family in their sufferings with absolute forgetfulness of self. Religion was the moving spring of Madame Elisabeth's life, but she had the rare gift of that tact and sweetness of disposition which never interfere with others. She joined in the pleasures of those around her with perfect simplicity, and her deep religious faith only brought comfort when needed,

[1] From an unpublished autograph letter belonging to the Marquis de Biencourt.



BED OF MARIE-ANTOINETTE.

without criticism or blame toward those less fervent than herself. She passionately loved her brother Louis XVI, and any sacrifice made for him seemed easy. The Queen had learned to appreciate the sterling qualities which underlay the King's unattractive exterior; she felt deeply his kindness, shown on all occasions, and his deep love for her. But Madame Elisabeth contributed more than any one else, or any thing, to bring them together, to rouse dormant affection in the Queen for her husband. Her influence was always good; she was ever the gentle peacemaker ready to soothe any irritation or to remove any misunderstanding.

About this time a strange prophecy was the subject of general interest and wonder. Madame d'Oberkirch, in her memoirs, alludes to several current prophecies, and particularly mentions this one, attributed to M. Cazotte,[1] which had attracted so much attention and yet seemed so impossible to be realized. La Harpe, the well-known writer, gives it in full. Incredible as such foresight seems, the tradition has been preserved till now in the family of the Duc de Gramont and also in that of Cazotte; in both it is fully believed to be authentic.

The Duchesse de Gramont had said during a political conversation in her house: "We women are very fortunate in having nothing to do with revolutions. It is understood that our sex exempts us from all such evils."

[1] In 1788.

"Your sex, mesdames," then said Cazotte, "will not save you this time. You will be treated like men, without any difference. You, Madame la Duchesse, will be led to the scaffold, and many other ladies with you, in a cart, with your hands tied behind your back."

"Oh, in such a case I shall at least have a mourning-coach!"

"No, madame; greater ladies than yourself will go like you in a cart, with their hands tied like yours."

"Greater ladies! What! The princesses of the royal blood?"

"Greater ladies still."

There was an awe-struck silence; every one felt that the jest, if it was a jest, was going too far. Madame de Gramont, wishing to dispel the cloud, exclaimed in her most careless tone of banter: "You will see that he will not even allow me a father confessor!"

"No, madame; you will have none—nor any one else. The last to whom the favor shall be granted will be—"

Cazotte stopped and remained silent.

"Well, who is the happy mortal who will have such a privilege?"

"It will be the last retained by him, and he is *the King of France!*"

The seer might have added the "Woe to myself!" of the prophet during the siege of Jerusalem; for Cazotte died on the scaffold during the fearful times of which he had such an extraordinary prevision.

Meanwhile events were ripening. Loménie de Brienne had been obliged to resign, and the people danced around bonfires in which he was burned in effigy. The Queen, most imprudently, but through a mistaken idea of the duty of remaining faithful to friends, showed him marked sympathy and multiplied tokens of favor, with the result of such exasperation on the part of the populace that the King forbade her to go into Paris for fear of public insult.

Madame Lebrun had painted a group of the Queen and her children which was sent to the yearly exhibition of paintings. This interesting picture is still to be seen at Versailles; it is in the affected style of the period, and may seem theatrical at the present time; but it is a pretty picture and attracts great attention from visitors. The Queen is seated, with the little Duc de Normandie on her knee; the young Princess, her daughter, is leaning over her and looking up mournfully into her face; while the little Dauphin is raising a dark veil covering an empty cradle—an allusion to the death of the baby, Princesse Sophie. The picture is sad but very pleasing. The frame was not ready when Madame Lebrun sent it to the exhibition, and it was feared that it could not remain, for the portrait of the Queen was immediately entitled "Madame Deficit," and was constantly insulted. But the frame was finally placed, and the charm of the picture won its way despite opposition.

The death of the poor little Princesse Sophie, "so pretty just before she died," as Madame Elisabeth

wrote, was the beginning of the new era of sorrow which awaited Marie-Antoinette. Her elder son, the Dauphin, whose birth had been hailed with such delight, was one of those grave, quiet children who seem doomed to an early death. He grew too fast, became deformed, and then crippled. The Queen could not believe that his condition was so serious, and the physicians mercifully left her the delusion that the air of Meudon would restore his strength, and that all would then come right. But the poor child was in a rapid decline, and nothing could be done. He was extremely sweet-tempered, patient, and amiable; but, strange to say, he could not endure the presence of his state governess, Madame de Polignac, and when so ill that he knew his fancies would be tolerated, he would peremptorily order her to leave the room. A sort of instinct seemed to warn him of the injury that she had done to his mother; it was in vain that Madame de Polignac tried every means of propitiation: he could not bear her presence near him.

But the state of public affairs was becoming so alarming that even the maternal anxiety of the Queen could not absorb her thoughts nor prevent the worst political forebodings. There were public meetings, revolutionary speeches, noisy demonstrations; disaffection reigned in all classes, more particularly directed against the Queen.

The necessity of summoning the States-General of the nation was now brought forward by the min-

isters as the only means of extrication from the overpowering difficulties, more particularly financial, against which the government had to struggle.

There was much discussion in the council as to whether it would be preferable to have this new assembly at Versailles or in a more distant town. The Queen instinctively felt the danger of being too near Paris, and urged the King to keep all parliamentary agitation at a distance, which would certainly have been wise. But the minister Necker took an optimistic view, refused to allow that there would be any danger, and urged the choice of Versailles. The King, as usual, yielded.

The Queen and the Comte d'Artois took different views on some points, which produced some coldness between them. But the most serious adversary was the Duc de Chartres, now the Duc d'Orléans, who headed a party in constant opposition to the government, and more especially to the Queen. The King personally disliked him, and made him feel it with his characteristic roughness. This treatment, which he resented, he attributed mainly to the Queen. The Duc d'Orléans, a man of weak character and limited capacity, was surrounded by adventurers who made use of him as a tool to further their own schemes, while his licentious conduct also threw him under the direct influence of disreputable women who hated the Queen, by whom they felt they were despised.

CHAPTER XII

Convocation of the States-General — Royal pomp shown for the last time — The Queen subjected to insulting cries—Death of the Dauphin — Superstition and wax candles — The Bastille taken — Murder of the governor, de Launay, and of the provost Flesselles — Scenes of "Sentiment" — Flight of the Polignac family — Departure of several princes of the royal blood — Delusion of Lafayette — Banquet of the Guards at Versailles.

THE convocation of the States-General (May 5, 1789), a magnificent ceremony, was the last occasion on which the King and Queen of France appeared in their royal pomp and splendor. The King, wearing his royal insignia, had with him his brothers and all the princes of the royal family, except the Duc d'Orléans, who, to court popularity, chose to take his place among the deputies instead of holding his rank among the princes. The Queen, in full court dress, was surrounded by the princesses, her aunts and sisters-in-law; but as she passed, with all her grace and majesty, such a burst of threatening cries — "Vive le Duc d'Orléans!" — came from the assembled crowd, that she seemed about to faint, and the princesses supported her for a few moments. By a violent effort she regained apparent composure, and was able to continue her part in the cere-

mony, but she retained a most painful impression of the incident.

The King was received with demonstrations of loyalty,— at that time he still retained a considerable amount of popularity,— but while he was allowed to have good intentions, he was supposed to be under bad influence — that of the Queen and of the Comte d'Artois, who was intensely hated and publicly insulted by the populace. They cried, "Vive le roi!" and then, addressing the Comte d'Artois: "Yes, vive le roi! in spite of you, Monseigneur, and your opinions!"

The provincial deputies all asked to visit Trianon, with the expectation of seeing a most extraordinary display of magnificence which was supposed to have ruined the nation by its cost.

When they were shown the small house, with its simple though artistic decoration, they would not believe that this was the fairy palace of which they had heard so much. They eagerly asked for the room "which was all in precious stones," and would not believe that there was nothing of the kind. It was supposed that this absurd report had spread into the distant provinces in consequence of a piece of scenery, representing some hall in a fairy-tale, which had been made for a theatrical performance under Louis XV. This pasteboard decoration had columns wreathed with bits of colored glass representing precious stones, but of course utterly worthless, and certainly not of a kind to ruin any one. The depu-

ties, however, would not be convinced, and left the premises declaring that the really splendid apartments of the palace had been concealed from them!

The poor little Dauphin died exactly a month after the opening of the States-General. If his poor mother could have foreseen the fate which awaited his younger brother, she would have looked upon his death as a peculiar privilege instead of a cause for bitter grief, but, anxious as the poor Queen must have been, she could not have imagined what was in store for those she loved. And yet she had sad though vague forebodings.

Madame Campan mentions that one evening, as the Queen was conversing with her ladies on the threatening aspect of events, one of the four wax candles placed on her dressing-table went out. Madame Campan lighted the candle again; but, as she did so, a second candle became extinguished, and then a third. The Queen caught the hand of Madame Campan, and squeezing it in a frightened manner, exclaimed: "Misfortune causes superstitious feelings; if the fourth candle goes out, nothing will prevent me from looking upon this as a bad omen."

The fourth candle went out!

Marie-Antoinette lived in a state of nervous excitement, and was beginning to lose the power of sleep. Every day brought some fresh cause for alarm. With the month of July came popular insurrections in Paris, several days following; on the fourteenth, the attack on the Bastille, and the hor-

rible murder of the governor, de Launay, and of Flesselles.

Under Louis XVI the Bastille was no longer exclusively a state prison; and it would be about as reasonable to pull down, in the present day, the Tower of London for the iniquities committed there in the olden time, as it was then to destroy the Bastille. It was a prison, like any other; and at the time when the populace burst in there were seven prisoners, all of whom were confined for criminal acts.

The scenes described by Dickens in his "Tale of Two Cities" are simply untrue and absurd; the whole book is a totally false picture, utterly unworthy of his genius, and showing absolute ignorance of the period that he professes to describe. There was virtually no defense of the Bastille, nor in reality any means of defense; and the murder of the governor was an act of ferocity, without a shadow of excuse.

The Queen wept bitterly when she was informed of this horrible event; but although she foresaw the consequences, it was in vain that she urged the King to take energetic measures: to retire into a fortified town, with faithful troops, and there to act as the head of the nation to restore public order. The King feared the responsibility of making matters worse, and always strove to conciliate. The day after the taking of the Bastille, when the insurgents, frightened at their own act, would easily have been

brought to submission by a display of armed force, he went to the Assembly with his two brothers, on foot, without any escort or guards, and made pathetic speeches, offering to send away his troops from Versailles. There were sentimental scenes, characteristic of the sentimental time; the deputies followed the King to the palace, and asked to see the Queen and the new Dauphin—the little Duc de Normandie, who had succeeded to his brother's honors as heir apparent to the crown—a beautiful and interesting child.

The question of the King's departure with the troops was discussed with his counselors; the Queen was warmly in favor of this decision, and had hopes that it would be adopted, for she began to burn papers as a preparation, and taking her jewels out of their cases, put them into a box, which she intended to take with her in her carriage. But to the Queen's great distress, it was finally settled that the King should go to the Hôtel de Ville in Paris, and then return to Versailles.

There had been violent demonstrations against the Polignac family, and the Duchess had been burned in effigy. The Queen, much alarmed, exhorted them to leave the country immediately. The Prince de Condé, the Duc de Bourbon, the Duc d'Enghien, the Comte d'Artois and his children, left Versailles with the troops.

The Queen sent for the Duc and Duchesse de Polignac at eight o'clock in the evening, and urged them

to lose no time in their preparations; they were unwilling to leave her, but the King ordered them to go at once, saying that he had given the same orders to his brother the Comte d'Artois, who had wished to accompany him to Paris, which the King would not allow. The Queen and her friend parted with great grief, their affection having been revived by the serious nature of present events; happily, neither could suppose that they would never meet again. The necessary preparations were made in three hours' time; at midnight they left Versailles, and managed to reach Switzerland safely.

On the 17th of July the King bravely went to Paris with no defenders but the new National Guard, of which Lafayette had accepted the command. His life was evidently in danger; but although Louis XVI was deficient in moral courage, he possessed great personal valor, and behaved throughout the day with the utmost coolness and composure. The crowd was silent, but evidently hostile, till, after reaching the Hôtel de Ville, the King appeared on the balcony, and accepting from the mayor, Bailly, the new tricolor cockade, fastened it to his hat. There was then a burst of enthusiasm, with which the good and well-meaning King was delighted.

The Queen had remained at Versailles in an agony of expectation; the King arrived safely at ten o'clock in the evening, and in the midst of the joyful embraces of those most dear to him, he repeated several times: "Happily there was no bloodshed, and I am

resolved that never shall a drop of French blood flow through my orders."

Alas! as even the gentle Madame Elisabeth foresaw, the determination to spare miscreants only served to sacrifice the lives of his most devoted adherents.

Four days later the atrocious murder of Foulon, an old man of seventy-six years whom Lafayette vainly tried to save, and of his son-in-law Berthier, showed the real nature of the monsters whom the poor King vainly tried to conciliate. Lafayette had sent in his resignation after the horrible atrocity which he had vainly tried to prevent; but he was persuaded to withdraw it, which, for the sake of his fame, is much to be regretted.

The character of Lafayette was high and noble; but, unfortunately, he courted popularity and lived in enthusiastic delusions, without understanding the difference of nature between the Americans, whom he admired so much, and his own countrymen, or the difference of situation between the two countries. This was the cause of fatal mistakes and irreparable evils.

The Queen, hearing that alarming rumors were current with regard to the Abbé de Vermond, urged him also to leave the country. He was able to reach Vienna safely, and remained there till his death.

Several insurrections took place in September, which Lafayette put down successfully. Unfortunately, the arrival at Versailles of a new regiment

was the occasion of a banquet of welcome, according to custom, given by the King's Guards, on October 1, in the theater of the palace. The King and Queen had not intended to be present at this banquet; but as considerable loyalty and enthusiasm were shown, they were persuaded to appear with the Dauphin. There was violent excitement, with enthusiastic demonstrations of loyalty, which were grossly exaggerated and misrepresented in Paris, where the populace began to propose going to Versailles and taking possession of the King and royal family.

CHAPTER XIII

Insurrection in Paris — The populace force Lafayette to lead them to Versailles — Advice of the Minister of the Interior, Comte de Saint-Priest — Mistaken refusal of the Queen to leave the King — His indecision — Mistaken views of Necker and Lafayette — Attack on the Queen's apartments — Devoted bravery of the Guards — The Queen forced to seek refuge in the King's apartments — Her intrepidity — The Royal Family taken forcibly to Paris — Arrival at the Tuileries — The little Dauphin — The Princesse de Lamballe — Daily life of Marie-Antoinette.

FOR several days after the fatal banquet of the Guards there had been great agitation in Paris, where every kind of false report as to the King's plans and intentions was current. On the morning of October 5, 1792, women began to rush about the streets crying that the bakers had no bread. They went in a body to the Hôtel de Ville, where Maillard, one of the most prominent among the insurgents who had attacked the Bastille, took command of this army of viragos, while the great alarm-bells were ringing a full peal. The whole crowd was made up of the very lowest elements in the Parisian populace,— the most degraded women, vagabonds, malefactors,— all more or less intoxicated, roaring revolutionary songs, with cries of vengeance, while

brandishing old guns, swords, and pikes. The women expressed especial hatred toward Marie-Antoinette.

"Austrian!" they cried, "you have danced for your own pleasure; now you must dance for ours!" The horrible threats uttered in addition to this are unfit to be transcribed.

Another crowd of rioters went to Lafayette, who was on horseback commanding the National Guards near the Hôtel de Ville, and called upon him to lead them. The National Guards fraternized with the rioters. All cried: "To Versailles! To Versailles!" Lafayette tried in vain to pacify, or at least to gain time; at last, however, under the impression that he might direct the mob, and that his presence would prevent violence, he consented to go at their head to Versailles, whither they had been preceded by the women.

For some days rumors of an intended attack of the populace had reached Versailles; but neither the King nor the Queen believed in danger, and no precautionary measures had been taken. Confidence was so complete that the King had gone to Meudon for shooting, and the Queen to Trianon attended only by a servant.

The weather was dark and cloudy, and the Queen's thoughts were certainly as sad as were the skies above her. She walked in the grounds, with the autumn leaves falling around her, and summoning her head gardener, began to settle with him what

was to be done there. She then went to her dairy, and seeing that drizzling rain was beginning, she took refuge in her grotto, where she sat in deep, grave meditation. Suddenly she saw a page hurrying toward her with a letter. The Comte de Saint-Priest, Minister of the Interior, had written a few hurried lines begging the Queen to come back to the palace immediately, as an invasion by the Parisian populace was feared. Marie-Antoinette hastened to leave Trianon, little dreaming that she would never see again her loved retreat, where the happiest days of her life had been spent.

She walked through the park of Versailles, as usual, followed by her attendant footman, and hastened to reach the palace.

The King had also received at Meudon a hasty summons from M. de Saint-Priest. A strange gentleman coming from Paris then addressed him as he was mounting his horse, assuring him that there was no danger — only women coming to ask for bread — he begged his Majesty to "have no fear."

"Fear, sir!" exclaimed the King angrily; "I never knew fear in my life!" And spurring his horse down one of the steepest paths in Meudon, he rode toward Versailles at full gallop. There he found the Queen and Madame Elisabeth, who, having seen the crowd in the distance from her house at Montreuil, had hastily returned to the palace of Versailles, and now urged her brother to take energetic measures of repression.

PETIT TRIANON, VERSAILLES.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

A council was called, and M. de Saint-Priest, with the hearty concurrence of Marshal de Beauvau and several of the ministers, urged the King to send troops immediately to defend the bridges over the Seine; at the same time the Queen and the royal children would go to Rambouillet, near Versailles, while the King, with a thousand cavalrymen, would meet the rioters, order them to retreat, and if they did not obey, disperse them by cavalry charges, which he thought would be sufficient to make them take flight; if not, the King with his troops could retreat on Versailles, and thence reach Rambouillet, where the Flanders regiment was stationed.

Unhappily, the minister Necker declared that this plan would cause an outbreak of civil war; that there was nothing to fear in allowing matters to go on without violent repression; and that it would suffice to parley with the rioters.

The King's dislike of any measures which might cause bloodshed was only too much encouraged by the optimistic view taken by Necker; and, unfortunately, before coming to a decision, he went to consult the Queen, who absolutely refused to leave him. The whole proposal thus fell to the ground. The feeling which prompted the Queen's resolution was high and noble; but in all probability the King would have been induced to show more energy if he had not been hampered by anxiety for the fate of his wife and children.

The rain fell in torrents, and every one hoped that

this might disperse the rioters. Meanwhile, the women who formed the majority of the first detachment reached the palace. The Prince de Luxembourg, captain of the Guards, asked for the King's orders; but he scoffed at the mere proposal of showing violence to women, and the Guards were forbidden to use their arms. The King received a deputation of the women, gave them all the money at his disposal, and treated them with so much kindness that they were conquered; but not so the others, who became all the more violent.

Night seemed to bring more quiet; but the whole town seemed paralyzed with terror. The night was dark, and ragged men, armed with pikes and clubs, knocked at the doors demanding food. The women had sought shelter in the Assembly of the States-General, and there they ate and drank in the midst of a number of representatives who had remained.

Meanwhile, another council was called at the palace, and hardly had the seats been taken when a letter from Lafayette, brought by an aide-de-camp, was given to M. de Saint-Priest, announcing his arrival with the National Guards and a number of Parisians who came to expostulate with the King on their grievances. He assured his Majesty that there would be no disturbance, and that he would answer for order. Saint-Priest read "between the lines" that Lafayette had been obliged to yield to force, and in no wise shared his confidence. Saint-Priest then made a fresh appeal to the King, entreat-

ing him not to lose a moment in leaving Versailles with his troops, escorting the Queen and the royal children to Rambouillet. There was now no possibility of resistance; flight was imperatively necessary; the King could not wait for the arrival of the mob. "Sire," repeated Saint-Priest, "if you are taken to Paris to-morrow, your crown will be lost."

The Queen consented to go, as the King would accompany her; but Necker again vehemently opposed the King's departure. The carriages were ordered, however, and Saint-Priest now hoped that all would be saved; but the King still hesitated, and thus the opportunity was missed.

At ten o'clock Lafayette appeared with a crowd of rioters and twenty thousand National Guards. He went first to the Assembly, assured the deputies of his conviction that order would be maintained, and then went to the palace. As he came into the apartments where the court was assembled, a voice cried: "Here comes Cromwell!"

Lafayette quickly answered: "Sir, Cromwell would not have come alone!" Then going up to the King, he said with deep emotion: "Sire, I bring you my head in the hope of saving your Majesty's."

He added expressions of absolute confidence in the National Guards whom he had brought with him; and as they were a large force, he declared that he would answer for the preservation of order. He had patrolled the town, and all was quiet everywhere.

The King was only too much disposed to tempo-

rize; he trusted the positive assurances of Lafayette, who was undoubtedly sincere, but deluded, his delusion being carried to such an extent that he took no precautionary measures, and left the palace in its usually unguarded condition. For this Lafayette cannot be excused, having already witnessed such savage massacres in Paris that he well knew what the mob might be tempted to do when thus let loose. To be sure, he had been for seventeen hours on horseback, and naturally was overcome with fatigue. Rest was necessary; but instead of remaining at the palace, where his presence might be required at any moment, he followed his natural preference for his own home in the town. His conduct is severely judged by French writers even of moderate views; he certainly showed little care and foresight at a time when both were imperatively necessary.

The King and Queen, sharing his security, retired to rest at two o'clock in the morning, and at first all was quiet. The Queen had desired her ladies to go to bed; happily, their loyal anxiety prevented them from doing so, and calling their own personal attendants, the four women sat before the door of the Queen's bedchamber without undressing. At half-past five in the morning they heard loud cries and guns fired; one of the ladies flew into the Queen's bedchamber to awaken her, while another lady ran to the place where she heard the noise. On opening the door, she saw one of the Queen's guards,[1] covered

[1] Miomandre de Ste-Marie, whose predecessor had been killed.

with blood, assailed by a crowd of rioters, and bravely defending the entrance to the Queen's apartments. He turned his head, crying: "Madame, save the Queen! Her life is in danger!" The lady shut and bolted the door, leaving the brave guard to his fate, and also fastened the door of the next room; then, running to the Queen, she warned her to fly at once without stopping to dress. The Queen sprang to her feet; her attendants threw a mantle and petticoat around her, without even taking time to fasten them, and by a door concealed behind the hangings, and which is still shown to visitors, the Queen and her ladies passed into the "Œil de Bœuf" room leading to the King's apartments. A door of communication which was never locked outside was found fastened; happily, a servant opened it, and the Queen rushed into the King's bedchamber. He was not there, having anxiously gone to her apartments by another passage. He found only some of the guards who had taken refuge there; the rioters had not discovered the way among the various rooms and halls, and happily did not reach the Queen's bedchamber. The King hastily returned to his own, where he found the Queen with the royal children, who had been brought by the state governess, Madame de Tourzel (appointed after the flight of Madame de Polignac). Soon "Monsieur" and "Madame" (Comte and Comtesse de Provence) came, also Madame Elisabeth and the "Mesdames de France," aunts of the King; Madame Adelaide showing character-

istic resolution, and saying firmly: "We will teach them how to die!"

In the midst of all this confusion and terror, Lafayette had hurried to the palace without even stopping to have a horse saddled, and arrived, fortunately, in time to save the lives of a number of guards,[1] who had been dragged into the Place d'Armes before the palace, to be massacred there. Two had been cruelly murdered at the first assault; their heads had been cut off and placed on pikes.

Saint-Priest, who witnessed the affray and the efforts of Lafayette, then tried to reach the King's apartments, where Lafayette himself was repulsed by the guards, who would not open the doors of the "Œil de Bœuf" room. After some parleying they, however, consented to admit him; and he placed there some grenadiers to assist in the defense, so that the populace did not penetrate. The Queen, hastily dressed in a morning *déshabillé*, stood at one of the windows of the King's bedchamber, watching the crowd, to whom from time to time Lafayette addressed speeches from the balcony, which were answered by loud cries: "To Paris! To Paris!" A few shots were fired.

The Queen said calmly: "I know that these people have come to demand my head; but my mother taught me not to fear death."

[1] The Gardes du Corps, or body-guard, were all gentlemen. Varicourt, one of the murdered guards, had been killed while defending the door leading to the Queen's apartments; Miomandre de Ste.-Marie then took his place, and was left for dead, but was saved.

Lafayette reappeared. "Madame, the people call for you to come out upon the balcony."

For a moment she shrank back. The appearance of the mob was terrific, and guns were pointed toward her.

"Madame, it is necessary to restore peace —"

"Then I will go anywhere," said the Queen, "even to death itself (*jusqu'à la mort*)."

She took her two children by the hand, and came out on the balcony at the center of the palace, through the room in which Louis XIV died. There was a loud cry: "No children!"

Did they intend to kill her?

She evidently thought so, for pushing the two children into the room behind her, she came forward alone, calm and resolute, looking up to heaven.

There was a momentary reaction, the guns were lowered, and a cry of "Vive la reine!" was heard. Lafayette came to her side on the balcony, and kissed her hand. There were louder cries. But those of "À Paris! à Paris!" became more and more vehement. The King came out repeatedly on the balcony with Lafayette, who addressed the crowd, but without much effect. Saint-Priest, who relates the whole scene, describes the King as being in a state of bewilderment, without seeming to know what to say or do. Saint-Priest went up to him and urged his departure for Paris, resistance being now impossible, as coming too late. The Queen then said: "Oh, Monsieur de Saint-Priest! why did we not

go away yesterday?" Saint-Priest rather bitterly retorted: "It is no fault of mine." "I know it," said the Queen sadly; and her manner proved that she had not shared the responsibility of the King's change of plans.

At first he made no answer to the exhortations of Saint-Priest, but finally he consented to go to Paris; on which there were a few cries of "Vive le roi!" and the populace retired from the courts of the palace.

At one o'clock the royal family set off at a foot-pace, their carriage surrounded by insurgents and by the lowest of women, who uttered loud cries of insult and triumph. It has been said by several writers that the heads of the murdered guards were carried before the royal carriage. This does not seem to be true; the horrible trophies were taken to Paris, and preceded the court — but two hours before the King's departure, consequently not in the vicinity of his carriage.

The royal children, with their governess, Madame de Tourzel, accompanied the King and Queen; also Madame Elisabeth. The Mesdames, aunts of the King, had gone to their country house of Bellevue, near Versailles. The drive to Paris, which usually required from an hour and a half to two hours, lasted during six hours of torture and insult. Before going to the Tuileries, the King was taken like a captive to the Hôtel de Ville, where the mayor, Bailly,[1] made speeches of welcome. The King re-

[1] He perished on the scaffold during the Revolution.

plied that he came "with pleasure and confidence" to his good town of Paris!

At last the exhausted travelers were allowed to reach the Tuileries, where of course nothing was prepared for their reception, the palace having been uninhabited by the court since the childhood of Louis XV. The Queen's ladies sat upon chairs during the first night; the royal children slept on camp-beds. The day had been terrible for them, yet they seem to have endured it with wonderful courage and calmness. The poor little Dauphin was not quite five years old!

When the morning came, hearing noise around the palace, the poor child ran to his mother. "Oh! mama," he cried, "is to-day still yesterday?" As he looked around, and saw everything so different from what he had left at Versailles, he said wonderingly: "Everything is very ugly here!" "My child," said the Queen, "Louis XIV lived here, and we must not be more difficult to please than he was."

But her heart was full, and when the Diplomatic Corps came to offer good wishes and congratulations she apologized for receiving them in so imperfect a manner, adding, "You know that I did not expect to come here!" in a voice broken by the tears which she strove to repress.

She wrote to her brother, Joseph II: "You have perhaps heard of our misfortunes before now. I still live, but I owe this only to Providence and to

one of my guards, who was hacked to pieces in trying to save me."

To Madame de Lamballe she wrote: "I still seem to hear the howling roar of the crowd, and the cries of my guards. These horrible scenes will occur again; but death has been too near for me to fear it. I thought I should be torn to pieces."

The first impulse of Madame de Lamballe was to share with her Queen and friend the dangers described; and without hesitation or a shade of personal fear she joined her at the Tuileries immediately, bringing all her heart to comfort and sympathize.

During the whole of the terrible first day—so like "yesterday," as the poor little Dauphin said—the Queen was repeatedly obliged to go to the window and speak to the degraded women who had brought her from Versailles. In doing so she showed so much gentleness and sweetness that even these were conquered, and asked her for the ribbons she wore as a memento, saying: "She is really good and kind."

Furniture and necessaries were brought from Versailles, and life was resumed much as it had been regulated there. The Queen, however, lived more alone in her private apartments, and was much engrossed by the education of her children. She was present at all the lessons they received. As we have seen, books were never a favorite resource for herself, and at that time her mind was too much under the influence of the agitation of passing events to be

able to give reading any attention; she preferred needlework, of which she did a surprising quantity, such as tapestry-work, knitting, etc. With the assistance of Madame Elisabeth, she worked a whole carpet, which was found at the Tuileries by Josephine, and much admired by her. With characteristic kindness, she had it carefully put away, to be forwarded to the Queen's daughter, the Duchesse d'Angoulême.

At the time when the Tuileries palace was inhabited by Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette there was no separation whatever from the garden, and those who came upon the terrace could look in at the windows. Louis-Philippe caused a sort of excavation to be made, like the areas of English houses, with an iron railing; and Napoleon III took a portion of the garden for the use of the Prince Imperial; but previously the inhabitants of the palace had no privacy whatever. This was a sore trial to Marie-Antoinette, who could not even breathe the air at her windows without being in contact with intruders alternately disposed to show inconvenient enthusiasm and insulting hostility.

The Queen's apartments were on the ground floor, near those of the King[1]; the royal children were above, with the state governess, Madame de Tourzel; one of the small, dark staircases so common at the Tuileries allowed private communication between the floors. The Queen received the courtiers twice a

[1] Afterward used by Napoleon III and the Prince Imperial.

week, before mass, and on those days she dined in public with the King; but her life was far more retired than at Versailles. The Princesse de Lamballe gave evening receptions, which were brilliantly attended. The Queen was at first occasionally present; but she soon found that in the excited state of popular feeling it was better to remain away. How changed was her life from what it had been! But Marie-Antoinette herself was no longer the same being.

CHAPTER XIV

Attempt of the royalists to carry off the King by force — The King will not consent — The two guards, Miomandre de Ste.-Marie and his companion, received and thanked by the Queen — Unfortunate shyness of the King — St. Cloud — Fears of poison for the Queen — Interview with Mirabeau — Plans for flight — Procrastination — Return of Fersen — What the Queen thought absolutely necessary for precipitate flight — Rumors in the public world.

THE King was more than ever imbued with the best intentions, and the most honest desire of restoring peace by every personal sacrifice; but his situation was one devoid of all precedent which could in any way guide his actions, and he was surrounded not only by enemies, but by too zealous friends, all equally dangerous as regards results. The aristocracy remaining in Paris came to offer homage and marks of faithful attachment; but these were put forward with a degree of ostentation which was considered by the opposite party as amounting to wilful provocation. The King tried to pacify, but his most devoted adherents gave out that he was acting under compulsion, and his adversaries doubted his sincerity.

Some of his devoted subjects formed a plan of seizing his person by force, taking him away from

the Tuileries, and removing him to a town where he would be free from the pressure of Paris. In the beginning of March, 1790, everything was ready for the execution of this bold undertaking; the National Guards had been bribed, and all had been prepared to secure his safety after leaving the palace. But the conspirators considered that the King's expressed consent was necessary, and the Comte d'Hinnisdal was deputed to obtain it before midnight, the appointed hour.

He explained the whole plan to Monsieur Campan, father-in-law of the Queen's lady of the bedchamber, who undertook to ask for the King's orders.

The royal family were assembled in the Queen's apartments; the King was playing at whist with the Queen, "Monsieur" (Comte de Provence) and his wife, "Madame." The Princess Elisabeth was kneeling on a stool near the card-table. Monsieur Campan informed the Queen of the Comte d'Hinnisdal's mission. No one answered a word. At last the Queen, addressing the King, said: "Monsieur, did you hear what Campan has just told us!"

"Yes, I heard," said the King, continuing the game. "Monsieur" then asked Monsieur Campan to repeat what he had said, and pressed the King to give some answer, with no effect. At last the Queen said: "You must, absolutely, say something to Campan." The King then spoke: "Tell Monsieur d'Hinnisdal that I cannot give my consent to be taken away by force."

The Queen eagerly addressed Monsieur Campan: "You hear — you understand — repeat exactly what the King has said: the King cannot *give his consent* to be taken away by force."

The Comte d'Hinnisdal showed anger when this answer was repeated to him. "I understand; he intends to throw all the blame on those who will devote themselves to him."

He left the palace, and Madame Campan was convinced by his manner that the whole undertaking would be given up. The Queen, however, hoped that the King's answer would be interpreted as a tacit consent. She desired Madame Campan to sit up, and with her made preparations for flight. But the night passed and all remained quiet. The Queen, evidently disappointed, then said to Madame Campan: "We must, however, get away; no one can tell what the rebels may do; danger increases daily."

Letters and advice of all kinds poured in upon the poor Queen. Some friends exhorted her to leave the country, saying that it would be better for the King to seem to act without her influence; but the Queen declared that she would never leave the King or her son; that the throne itself was in peril; and that the only advantage would be the possible saving of her own life, which she was willing to sacrifice.

The two guards who had been so terribly wounded in defending the door of the Queen's apartments at Versailles — Miomandre de Ste.-Marie[1] and his com-

[1] Miomandre de Ste-Marie received seventeen wounds.

panion — had survived, contrary to all expectation, and were now in a measure cured. With the other wounded guards, they had been carefully tended at the royal infirmary of Versailles. But the Queen was anxious that they should leave Paris, fearing lest they should be recognized and massacred by the mob. She wished, however, to see and thank them personally, and desired Madame Campan to summon them to her own apartment the next day, at eight o'clock in the evening, and to offer them what money they might require; adding that gold could not pay what they had done for her, and that she hoped the day would come when she could prove to them her gratitude; but that she offered them what they might need, as a sister would help a brother under similar circumstances.

They came at the appointed hour, and while Madame Campan was giving them the Queen's message, she came in herself, followed by the King and Madame Elisabeth. The Queen sat down in an easy-chair, Madame Elisabeth took a seat near her, and the King remained standing, with his back to the fire. The two guards stood before him. The Queen said that the King was anxious to see the brave men who had given such proofs of loyalty and attachment. Miomandre de Ste.-Marie answered in the most appropriate and affecting manner. Madame Elisabeth then spoke of the King's feelings on the subject, and the Queen urged them to leave Paris without delay; but throughout the whole interview

MADAME ELISABETH.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., N. Y., OF A PAINTING BY MME. VIGÉE LEBRUN, IN THE POSSESSION OF MME. LA MARQUISE DU BLAISDEL.

the King did not utter a word! He was evidently deeply moved, and his eyes were full of tears; but he remained silent. The Queen rose, and the King walked out of the room, followed by Madame Elisabeth. The Queen lingered, and standing by a deep window, she signed to Madame Campan, saying in a low voice:

"I am sorry to have brought the King here. I am sure that Elisabeth feels as I do. If the King had expressed to those brave fellows only one fourth part of what was in his thoughts concerning them, they would have been delighted; but he cannot conquer his shyness."

About this time the Emperor Joseph II died; but the Queen had been so much displeased at the views which he had adopted both in religious and political matters, that her sorrow for his death was not what it would have been some years before.

When the spring came the closeness and heat of the Tuileries, with the deficiency of exercise, from which the King's health suffered, caused a great desire on the part of Marie-Antoinette for the shady bowers of St. Cloud, where comparative freedom could be enjoyed. Permission for the removal of the royal family for the summer was granted without difficulty, and the watch kept over them was much relaxed. In fact, escape would have been easy during the sojourn at St. Cloud, and the question was discussed with some of their most devoted adherents, who urged them not to lose the oppor-

tunity. But, as usual, procrastination came across all plans of action: the King's aunts ("Mesdames") wished to leave France, and it was feared that the flight of the royal party from St. Cloud might create difficulties for them. But "Mesdames" did not go before the beginning of the following year (1791); the King had then left St. Cloud to winter in Paris, and was not allowed afterward to return to the summer palace. The opportunity was irretrievably lost!

Meanwhile a plot to poison the Queen was discovered, and caused great anxiety around her. Antidotes were kept in readiness by the advice of her head physician, who was particularly anxious with regard to the habit she had adopted of keeping powdered sugar in her bedroom. In the heat of a French summer there is often great thirst, and the manifold complications of etiquette before a glass of water could be obtained had so irritated Marie-Antoinette that she had simplified matters by having a decanter of water, a glass, and a bowl of powdered sugar on her chest of drawers, and helping herself when she wished for refreshment. By order of the physician, Madame Campan kept a quantity of powdered sugar in her own apartment, and several times a day exchanged it for that provided for the Queen. This was done secretly; but on one occasion the Queen came in unexpectedly.

"I suppose this has been settled between you and Monsieur Vicq-d'Azyr,"[1] she said, with a sad smile.

[1] The royal physician.

"Do not be afraid of poison; they will not try it. They have a more dangerous weapon in their hands—calumny. They will kill me with that!"

At St. Cloud the Queen had an interview with the celebrated demagogue orator Mirabeau, who had done so much harm to the royal cause, and who, being utterly unprincipled, had been won over by bribery. The Queen received him in the private gardens, and fascinated him so completely by her grace and charm of manner, that he left her saying with enthusiasm: "Madame, the monarchy is saved!"

Large sums were given to him, which, no doubt, had more influence still than the poor Queen's attractions. He was a man to be bought and sold; consequently, notwithstanding undeniable genius, a contemptible character. He seemed, however, sincere, and might have been very useful to the royal cause; but his improved intentions were frustrated by his unexpected death, attributed to poison, which occurred in a short time.

The court had returned to the Tuileries, and, as before, the King and Queen were besieged with contradictory advice and plans of conduct. The Queen often had interviews with Lafayette; but she did not like him, saying that he would sacrifice anything for the sake of popularity.

Meanwhile, there had returned one valued friend,—Fersen,—with whom the Queen began to form plans of escape, and who was wholly devoted to her. The romantic dreams of past days were over: the Queen

had now learned to love the King with her whole heart, and he completely engrossed her thoughts. But a stanch friend remained, whom she knew how to appreciate.

Unhappily, the success of arrangements such as those that the Queen was trying to settle generally depends on prompt execution; but this was not understood by the royal personages, whose practical knowledge of life was limited, and to whom a journey, in those days of slow traveling, seemed a formidable undertaking. The Queen ordered Madame Campan to have a whole outfit prepared for herself and the royal children. In vain the more experienced lady of the bedchamber told her Majesty that a queen of France, even when a fugitive, would find necessaries everywhere. The Queen would not admit the possibility of relying on any resources but plentiful supplies kept in readiness and within reach.

Royal ladies had not yet learned to fly without stopping to take an extra pocket-handkerchief!

The poor Queen, who was doomed by her fate to suffer the hardest privations, would not at that time be persuaded that she could undertake her journey without having a large chest of traveling requisites, containing everything that could possibly be wanted, from a silver warming-pan down to a drinking-bowl. The Queen had ordered this complicated traveling-case when the first insurrections suggested the possibility of *precipitate flight* becoming necessary!

Madame Campan, much alarmed at this fancy, entreated the Queen to consider the size and weight of a piece of furniture which could not be removed from her bedchamber without attracting notice and rousing suspicion.

The Queen, however, was convinced that the paltry excuse of sending it as a present to her sister the Archduchess Christina, wife of Prince Albert of Saxe-Teschen, Governor of the Netherlands, would suffice as a satisfactory explanation. Of course nobody believed this story; and on the very day that the chest was removed, Bailly, the Mayor of Paris, was informed that the royal family were preparing to depart.

The Queen's personal jewels were packed by herself, with the assistance of Madame Campan, in a box which was intrusted to her hair-dresser, Léonard, who, with the Duc de Choiseul, took them safely to Brussels, whence they were sent to Vienna. The crown jewels had been previously claimed by the state and given up by the Queen.

A traveling-carriage had been ordered by the King, and the execution intrusted to the care of the Comte de Fersen. This immense and ponderous vehicle was prepared so as to contain every imaginable comfort for the journey. In vain the King's advisers urged the advantage of having two small mail-coaches, which would not attract attention, and would admit of greater speed; the royal party would not hear of being separated, which would,

however, have greatly facilitated their escape. But the Queen would neither leave the King nor her children; Madame Elisabeth would not leave her brother; Madame de Tourzel claimed the right of sharing the danger to which her charges would be exposed, and which all this well-meaning sentimental devotion could not but greatly increase.

The plan of escape had been concerted with the Comte de Bouillé,[1] who had advised Valenciennes as a place of refuge, the Flemish frontier being the nearest and most easy of access; he suggested that the King could reach Montmédy, if he decided to do so, by going through the Netherlands and reëntering France on the Austrian side. The King objected the risk of forfeiture of the crown if he left the country, even for a temporary absence, and determined to go straight to Montmédy,—a long and troublesome journey by unfrequented routes, where troops sent to meet him would probably attract too much attention. Bouillé urged the necessity of having at least an experienced and energetic officer in the carriage with the fugitives, who could act for them in any unexpected emergency, and suggested Major d'Agoult as suitable for the mission to be fulfilled; but the persistent claims of Madame de Tourzel[2] caused this to be set aside.

The departure was delayed far too long, and too

[1] Commander of the army corps in the eastern region.

[2] Madame de Tourzel states in her memoirs that the matter was not fully explained to her.

many people were acquainted with the royal intentions. The higher functionaries were all loyal and devoted; but the numerous subordinates were not to be trusted, and rumors of a plan of flight were current in Paris.

The "Mesdames de France," aunts of the King, succeeded in leaving the country early in the year 1791, and much wished to take Madame Elisabeth with them; but she absolutely refused to leave her brother, whose fate she was determined to share.

Still the King delayed, saying that "the helm of the ship could not be forsaken during the storm," and his advisers vainly tried to bring him to an active decision. The Queen, with feverish anxiety, tried to rouse him from his apathy—to convince him that flight alone could bring safety.

The removal to St. Cloud for the summer had been settled as usual, and all preparations made for the arrival of the royal party; but when they took their seats in the carriage the National Guards closed the gates and refused to let them go. Lafayette attempted to exert his authority, and declared that he would force the passage if compelled to use violence, but could not obtain obedience; and after a struggle which lasted for two hours, while the populace joined the guards with seditious cries, declaring that the royal family should not go, the King, fearing mischief for his children, decided on remaining at the Tuileries, and the whole party sorrowfully returned to their apartments. The Queen, however,

found some satisfaction in the thought that the constraint to which they were subjected was thus fully proved. She was in constant correspondence with her brother Leopold II, who had succeeded to Joseph II; but hitherto the means of coming to her assistance had not seemed clearly defined. The tide of emigration was increasing; the exigencies of the succeeding assemblies likewise; anarchy reigned throughout the country, where no life was safe; and the unfortunate King, in the vain hope of preventing bloodshed, yielded to all the demands presented to him, even to those contrary to his conscience as a good Catholic, such as the decrees confiscating the property of the church and the civil constitution of the clergy, forbidden by the Pope. The Emperor Leopold wrote to his sister Marie-Antoinette that he could do nothing so long as they had not left Paris; and the King finally determined to try the plan of escape to Montmédy, where he would find Bouillé and his important army corps as a support, which he hoped would enable him to treat with the parliamentary assembly to advantage, while the frontier was so near that it would be easy to find a refuge should matters continue their unfavorable progress.

It was agreed that "Monsieur" and "Madame" (Comte and Comtesse de Provence) should leave Paris the same day, but by the Flanders route, and join the King as soon as he had reached the goal—Montmédy.

CHAPTER XV

Flight of the royal family — They are recognized on the road, and stopped at Varennes — Scenes in the house of the mayor — Return to Paris — Barnave and Péthion — Madame Elisabeth and Barnave — Thraldom in Paris — Disappointment of the Queen — Return of the Princesse de Lamballe — Kindness of the Queen toward those whose mismanagement had caused the failure of the journey — Mercy.

THE time of departure was secretly fixed for the night of June 20; but the presence of an attendant whose loyalty was suspected, and whose "waiting" ended the next day, occasioned a delay till the 21st, which disturbed the calculations of the auxiliaries concerned.

The usual ceremonies which attended the King and Queen when they retired to rest were gone through, and both were supposed to be safely in bed for the night, when the Queen rose, and dressing hastily in the most ordinary garb, went to her children, and dressed the Dauphin as a little girl, with the young princess, "Madame Royale." Madame de Tourzel, directed by the Queen, then passed through a door of communication which had been concealed by a piece of furniture, and leading her charges, she succeeded in leaving the palace unob-

served, and reaching a shabby, common hackney-coach waiting on the Place du Carrousel. The coachman, who played his part to perfection, was no other than Fersen himself, who jested with other coachmen, took snuff with them, and seemed completely one of themselves. Madame de Tourzel made the little Dauphin crouch down on the floor of the coach, concealed by the skirt of her dress. The child said innocently to his sister that he supposed they were going to act a play, as they were dressed up.

Madame de Tourzel waited with increasing anxiety, as she saw time go by and no one appear; but at last Madame Elisabeth came up, which revived hope. The King, however, did not come till after midnight, having been delayed by a conversation with Bailly and Lafayette, which he dared not abridge for fear of rousing suspicion.

But the Queen did not appear, and anxiety was great on all sides. The night was dark, and Paris was at that time badly lighted. The Queen, of course, never went on foot; the garde du corps who gave her his arm seems to have been as ignorant as herself of the streets about the palace, and by no means intelligent; for they lost their way, and wandered about for some time before finding the coach where the other fugitives waited so anxiously. Now all seemed safe, and Fersen went at full speed to Bondy, near Paris, where they found the traveling-carriage and another with the Dauphin's women-attendants, whom the Queen wished to have with her.

Carriages, horses, and postillions were all ready, and Fersen took leave hopefully of the royal party. Madame de Tourzel was supposed to be the Baronne de Korff, a Russian lady whose passport Fersen had procured for the fugitives. The King and Queen with Madame Elisabeth figured as steward, governess, and lady's-maid.

As the distance from Paris widened hope increased and spirits rose, while the King made plans for the future, discoursing at length on his good intentions for the benefit of his people.

"When once we shall have passed Châlons," he said confidently, "we shall be safe."

Châlons was passed, but, alas! they were not yet safe. The delay in leaving Paris, further increased by repairs to the carriage made necessary by trifling accidents on the road, had become so considerable that they missed in consequence the troops sent to escort them at several appointed places.

At Sainte-Ménehould, while the horses were being changed, the son of the postmaster, a man named Drouet, caught sight of the King's face in the carriage, and, comparing it with the King's head on paper money, he was satisfied. He followed the carriage to Clermont, and there hearing Varennes named as the next post, he rode across the country, reached the place before the royal carriage, and gave the alarm.

At Clermont the fugitives had found the regiment commanded by the Comte de Damas, who had waited

persistently, but so long that there was great excitement in the town, and finally the troops refused to obey orders. He then sent an officer as courier to precede the carriage and summon M. de Bouillé to Varennes. But, with the ill fortune which attended the fugitives throughout, the messenger mistook the way, and arrived too late.

With sad forebodings, but still "hoping against hope," they reached the wretched little town of Varennes, where Drouet had already roused the population and barricaded a bridge which the carriage must cross to continue the journey. Crowds rushed to stop the horses; the King and Queen were finally forced to alight and to go into the grocer's shop of the mayor, named Sauce. The latter led the way up a narrow staircase to two miserable rooms full of bales of sugar and tallow candles for the shop below. There was a bed, on which the tired children lay down and were soon fast asleep. Drums were beating, alarm-bells were ringing, and crowds of armed peasants from the surrounding villages were coming into the town to join the inhabitants.

Sauce addressed the King with some civility, saying that they had been informed of the presence of their King in the town, and that the municipal council was deliberating whether it was advisable to allow him to continue his journey. Louis XVI tried to equivocate. Sauce then changed his tone, and a sharp altercation followed. The Queen, seeing that denial and resistance were useless, then said with

characteristic spirit and a glance which silenced her adversary: "If you recognize your King, respect him!"

Louis XVI then tried to explain his motives, his good intentions, his position in Paris, and the necessity of reaching a distant town where he could in peace take measures for the happiness of his people.

Those present, including the mayor himself, seemed moved; the Queen, leaning on a package of candles, was looking at the sleeping children, while an old grandmother knelt down by their bed and shed tears.

With a gleam of hope, the Queen turned to the mayor's wife, who also seemed affected by the scene, and earnestly appealed to her to save their lives.

"Madame," said the woman roughly, but with tears in her eyes, "they would kill Monsieur Sauce. He is responsible, you see. I love my King; but then I love my husband too."

The argument of the poor woman was so natural that it is scarcely possible to blame her, dreadful as the consequences must be to the royal party.

The escort which they had expected to meet at Varennes, but which under present circumstances would in any case have proved insufficient, had been prevented from reaching them by the barricaded bridge. Several officers, however, managed to pass, and before the King had been absolutely forced to leave his carriage one had whispered to him: "There is a ford; I will try to get you over."

But the King feared injury to his children, and would not consent while it was still practicable to try this desperate resource. Now that they were prisoners in the house of Sauce, surrounded by a threatening crowd, strong measures had ceased to be possible. In all probability, had the King been alone he could have been saved; but a party of ladies and children complicated matters so as to paralyze the energy of those who would have made every effort to help him.

The only hope left lay now in the arrival of Bouillé with an important military force.

Eight hours of agonized suspense passed thus — listening in expectation, hoping, fearing, while the Queen paced the room restlessly, or threw herself on a chair, conquered by physical fatigue.

At an early hour of the morning two messengers from the Paris Assembly were announced, bearing a decree ordering all whom it might concern to give due assistance for the safe return of the King and his family to Paris.

One of the bearers was an aide-de-camp to Lafayette, who obeyed orders with great and evident regret. The Queen received the decree with a burst of indignation, and would have torn it if the King had not stopped her.

After long resistance, in the hope of the arrival of Bouillé, the King and Queen both earnestly pleading the excessive fatigue of the children, they recognized the impossibility of further delay, and sorrowfully

yielded to force, resuming their seats in the carriage which they had hoped would take them to security and liberty, and in which they must now return to thraldom and peril.[1]

The journey was rendered doubly painful by the crowd which constantly, from one village to another, followed the carriage with vociferation and insults. At a short distance from Varennes, Monsieur de Dampierre, who with loyal and respectful intentions had tried to reach the carriage, was brutally murdered by the crowd, to the horror and grief of the royal family.

At Châlons they found some comfort, the town being loyal and the inhabitants much distressed at the situation of the King and Queen. Marie-Antoinette had stopped there on her journey through France as Dauphine, and had been received with enthusiasm. She now alighted at the same house where she had rested then after passing under triumphal arches and receiving flowers accompanied with cries of welcome. Many of those present remembered the past, and expressed their sorrow to the Queen with tears. Flowers were again offered to her, and she found some comfort in these marks of sympathy at a time when all seemed to forsake her.

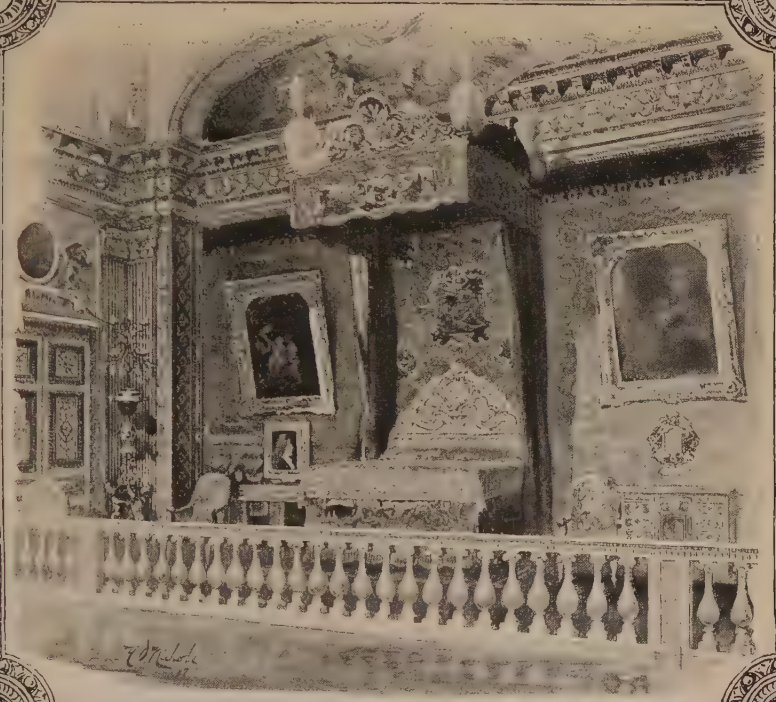
Some of the inhabitants of Châlons offered to show the King a private exit concealed in the house where the royal family lodged, and to secure his safety by means at their disposal; but they could

1 Bouillé and his troops reached Varennes shortly after their departure.

not undertake to deliver more than the King alone, and he refused to leave his family in danger. Had he been free like Charles II of England, he would have found many means of effecting his escape.

Near Epernay the "commissaries" sent by the Assembly reached the King's carriage. Péthion, a Jacobin or ultra-republican, and Barnave, of the more moderate party, took their seats in the crowded carriage, obliging the Queen to take the Dauphin on her knee, while Madame de Tourzel and Madame Elisabeth alternately took the young princess, "Madame Royale." Péthion was an ill-bred, vulgar coxcomb, whose presumption and offensive familiarity shocked the feelings of the royal fugitives, who took refuge in silence. Barnave, grave and reserved, was a gentleman, and behaved like one. After some time Madame Elisabeth, pleased with his appearance and manner, entered into conversation with him, and began a clear and concise justification of the King's conduct since the beginning of the Revolution. The Queen from time to time added a word; but comment was unnecessary, as what was said by Madame Elisabeth was amply sufficient, and Barnave seemed much impressed.

A priest who had tried to approach the King's carriage was on the point of being massacred like Monsieur de Dampierre. Madame Elisabeth uttered a cry of entreaty to Barnave, who vigorously interfered, and succeeded in his effort to save the poor priest. In his anxiety he was nearly thrown out of



CHAMBER OF LOUIS XIV

(CHÂTEAU DE VERSAILLES).

the carriage, and Madame Elisabeth held him by the coat, which almost brought a smile to the lips of the Queen, who afterward mentioned the incident as one of the most curious during the journey:

"The pious Elisabeth holding on to the republican deputy!"

As they drew near to Paris the heat was intense, and the dust, like a thick fog surrounding the carriage, almost suffocated the unfortunate travelers, who reached Paris in a state of complete exhaustion. The King seemed to feel a sort of relief on finding himself in his home again. The Queen was more under the influence of bitter disappointment.

The difficulties and sufferings of their position were considerably increased by the ill-fated attempt at flight. National guards were placed everywhere, and continual watch was established over the King and Queen. The latter had lost the power of sleep, and the nights seemed so endless that she ordered her shutters to be left open that the first ray of daylight might be welcomed.

An officer was stationed in an arm-chair before the open door of her room, and permission to have the bed of an attendant lady placed before that of the Queen as a screen was not granted without difficulty. During the day the door of the room where the royal party assembled was required to be left open that the guards might see and hear all that was said or done there. The King having tried to close the door, it was immediately opened, and the command-

ing officer said firmly: "Allow this door to remain open. Such are my orders."

Madame Campan states that during the single night spent at Varennes the Queen's hair had become as white as that of a woman of seventy. There must be considerable exaggeration in this statement, for the servant-girl who attended her immediately before her execution states that her hair was white at the temples only, but not perceptibly gray elsewhere.

"Monsieur" and "Madame" (Comte and Comtesse de Provence) had succeeded in effecting their escape to Brussels, and thence went to Coblentz to join the headquarters of the emigrant forces commanded by the Prince de Condé and the Comte d'Artois. The Princesse de Lamballe had intended to go to England, and was on her way when the news of the failure of the journey to Varennes reached her. The Queen wrote again and again entreating her not to come back to the Tuileries, on account of the ever-increasing danger; but she would not be prevented, and returned to meet a horrible death.

The Queen attributed the disastrous result of the unfortunate journey to Varennes entirely to the clumsiness of the auxiliaries employed to carry out the somewhat complicated arrangements of escorts, who were to meet them at certain places and failed to do so without any attempt to go beyond the places mentioned, in case they should have been accidentally delayed, which was the fact.

M. de Goguelat, who was supposed to be energetic

and resolute as well as thoroughly devoted to the King, had not even thought of sending vedettes to meet the carriage, which had not arrived at the appointed time; but at once concluded that the journey had been put off. Fearing to attract attention, he then left the highroad and followed cross-ways, without taking any means of informing the travelers of what had been done, should they unexpectedly arrive.

This disappointment, which brought others by disturbing the chain of escorts which had been prepared to meet the royal party and take them from stage to stage, was, in the Queen's opinion, the first cause of all the woes which awaited them; but to the surprise of those who knew the circumstances, M. de Goguelat was most kindly received when he appeared at the palace. Some remark being made to the Queen, she replied that he had acted for the best, according to his apprehension, and that she could not retain or show rancor for an error in judgment. According to the universal testimony of those around her, all the sufferings and anxieties of her daily life never ruffled her temper nor disturbed her habitual equanimity. She remained, as ever, the most amiable of women, always ready to say a kind word or to do a kind act, and much more anxious as regards the comfort of her attendants than disturbed by her own privations.

The poor Queen wrote incessantly to all those from whom she hoped to receive aid. She had

adopted an ingenious cipher: each correspondent had a copy of "Paul and Virginia," the well-known story, taking care to have the same edition. The figures used indicated the page and words, which, being detached, formed complete sentences. The Queen wrote frequently thus to her brothers-in-law, to Leopold II at Vienna, to Mercy, who was replaced at Paris by a chargé d'affaires, and to Gustavus III of Sweden, who showed a warm interest.

Madame de Tourzel, however, states that the Queen was much pained by the conduct of Mercy. One day, when alone with the Princesse de Tarente and Madame de Tourzel, Marie-Antoinette suddenly addressed them, saying:

"I must open my heart to friends whom I can trust like yourselves, and on whose attachment I can rely. I am wounded to the quick in my deepest feelings. When I first came to France I trusted completely Monsieur de Mercy, by my mother's advice. She said to me: 'He knows France well, having been ambassador there for so long a time; he can only give you the best advice as to the country where you will reign; look upon it as if it came from me, and be assured that you can only receive good advice from him.' I was only fourteen; I loved and respected my mother; I put my trust entirely in Monsieur de Mercy; I looked upon him as a father; and I have now the grief of seeing how completely I was deceived, and how little he cares for my sad position."

The fact was that Mercy was essentially a courtier and a diplomatist who strove to please the sovereign whom he served and from whom he expected personal advantage. So long as the maternal anxiety of Maria Theresa watched over Marie-Antoinette, he was devoted to her; when her brothers in succession became his masters, he followed their comparative indifference. But the lesson of selfish worldliness was deeply painful to the warm-hearted and sincere Marie-Antoinette.

Fersen had gone to Brussels after taking the royal family to Bondy, and was not able to return to France. Bouillé, heartbroken at the failure of the attempt to escape, had left France, where his life would have been sacrificed; but he wrote to the Assembly, boldly taking on himself the whole blame of having persuaded the King to try to reach Montmédy and the frontier.

Thus, one by one, the most devoted servants of the royal cause disappeared.

CHAPTER XVI

A new Assembly — A new constitution — Fears of poison — Death of Leopold II — Assassination of Gustavus III — The little Dauphin — The Queen's comfort — Barnave sacrifices his life — War with Austria declared — Unfortunate attempt of the king to destroy a libel against the Queen — The King refuses his consent to a decree sentencing to transportation the priests who had refused to take the schismatic oath — Insurrection of the populace — Insurrection of the 20th of June — The populace burst into the Tuileries — Coolness and courage of the King — Heroic conduct of Madame Elisabeth — Dignity of the Queen — Napoleon and the "Canaille" — The Queen seeks the intervention of the European powers — The terrible 10th August — The royal family take refuge in the National Assembly.

THE new Assembly was more hostile than the former ones, and a new constitution was prepared. The King accepted it, as he accepted everything demanded of him; but the princes at the head of the émigré army protested, and the announcement to the various powers was coldly received.

The King, however, went to the Assembly formally to accept the constitution; but he was received so discourteously that he came back deeply affected; also the Queen was much agitated. She passed into her private room, where the King followed her. He was so pale that the Queen anxiously asked if he was

ill. He sank into a chair and sobbed aloud, holding his handkerchief over his face.

"All is lost! Ah, Madame, and you witnessed such humiliation! You have come to France to see—" The Queen threw herself on her knees before him, and clasped him in her arms. Madame Campan, struck dumb with astonishment, lost her presence of mind and remained motionless. The Queen cried to her: "Oh, go away! go!" but in a tone which merely implied, "Do not remain to witness such a scene!"

The new constitution destroyed court privileges, and many ladies sent in their resignation, to the sorrow of the Queen, who saw herself forsaken by her followers when they lost so much less than she lost herself.

The sudden death of the Emperor Leopold, which the Queen attributed to poison, and the assassination of Gustavus III, brought more serious grief to the Queen. Gustavus, the day before he succumbed to the wound received at the fatal masked ball, sent word to the King and Queen of France that he especially regretted the injury to their interests that his death would probably cause.

The King and Queen were warned that one of the cooks in the royal kitchen had said that it would do good service to the country if the King's life were shortened.

It was settled therefore that henceforward the royal party would eat only roast meat, and that the

bread used would be brought by a devoted attendant named Thierry, who would also bring wine. The King liked pastry, which was bought by Madame Campan in different pastry-cooks' shops. The powdered sugar was also kept in her room. The princesses drank only water, and the King never drank at a meal more than half a bottle of wine mixed with water. The etiquette of former days had been suppressed, and the constraint of the first period after the return from Varennes had been somewhat relaxed; so the Queen and Madame Elisabeth dined with the King, without any attendance whatever (except when they rang for it), so as to secure free conversation. Madame Campan and Thierry brought what they had provided, which was concealed under the table, and took away the suspicious wine and pastry.

This distressing state of affairs lasted for several months; happily, they were then informed that the danger of poison had ceased.

For a short time after the acceptance of the constitution by the King a little more liberty was allowed, and the Queen was able to drive out with her children — a great boon especially to the poor little Dauphin, for whom change of scene and recreation were so necessary. He was a most affectionate and amiable child, grateful for any mark of attachment, and, like his mother, always ready to say some kind word or to pay some graceful attention. He had a little garden of his own on the terrace bordering the Seine, and he delighted in offering his flowers in the

prettiest manner. He enjoyed his lessons with his tutor, who knew how to make them interesting. One day he deeply affected those who heard his innocent talk and foresaw only too surely what the future would bring to the sweet child whom all loved.

As he finished his lesson he said brightly to his teacher: "My good abbé, I am *so happy!* I have such a kind papa, such a kind mama, and a second papa, a second mama, in you and my good Madame de Tourzel!"[1]

Poor child, how long was he to be "so happy"?

The Queen's apartments on the ground floor were not considered safe at night, and she was persuaded to sleep in the apartment of her children on the first floor. The poor little Dauphin only understood that his dear mother was to be near him, and was delighted. When morning came he ran to her, clasping her in his baby arms, and saying the prettiest things imaginable to show how he loved her. This was the happiest time in the day for the poor Queen.

Barnave had not forgotten the interest which his short intercourse with the royal family had awakened in his mind. He had interviews with the Queen, and tried to direct her influence in political matters. She submitted to his wishes and plans to a certain extent — greatly blamed by Mercy; so that amid such conflicting advice, the Queen was driven to a degree

[1] See memoirs of Madame de Tourzel.

of vacillation which obliged Barnave to retire. In a last interview, he bade her farewell in an affecting manner:

"Your misfortunes, Madame, and those which I foresee for France, had determined me to devote myself to serve you. I see that my advice does not agree with the views of your Majesties. I have not much hope of success for the plan which you are induced to follow; you are too far from the help which you expect; you will be lost before it can reach you. I earnestly hope that I may be mistaken in such a painful prophecy; but I am sure of paying with my head for the interest which your misfortunes have awakened in me. I ask as my only recompense the honor of kissing your hand."[1]

The Queen, weeping bitterly, gave him her hand, and retained a feeling of mingled esteem and friendship for Barnave, shared by Madame Elisabeth, and often expressed in their conversations.

The King had been reduced to the condition of a mere automaton, signing everything presented to him by the Assembly, which now insisted on his declaring war against Austria. With what a struggle he again consented may be imagined and it was only too visible when he went, pale and agitated, to give his official adhesion to the will of the country.

The first reverses exasperated the nation, which threw all the blame on the King and Queen (an act

[1] Barnave died on the scaffold, October 29, 1793, a few days after the execution of Marie-Antoinette.

of injustice which was repeated in 1870, after the declaration of war so reluctantly signed by Napoleon III).

Madame Campan was informed shortly afterward that the workmen of the manufactory of Sèvres had brought to the Assembly a quantity of printed sheets, which they declared to be a life of Marie-Antoinette. The director of the manufactory, being called upon to explain, stated that he had received an order to burn all this printed matter in the ovens used for firing the china.

While Madame Campan was making this communication to the Queen, the King reddened and hung his head. The Queen then said: "Monsieur, have you any knowledge of what this means?"

The King made no reply. Madame Elisabeth then asked for an explanation; still the King was silent. Madame Campan then retired; but in a few minutes the Queen herself came to her, with the information that the King, in the hope of suppressing a horrible libel by Madame de La Motte (the heroine of the necklace intrigue), directed against the Queen, had bought the whole edition and given orders for its immediate destruction; but that these orders had been so clumsily executed, that the whole had been sent to Sèvres, where the two hundred workmen employed in the manufactory had every opportunity of becoming acquainted with what the King had hoped to annihilate. The Queen was much distressed; but as the King was still more affected, she tried to

conceal her own feelings, so as not to increase his regret for a mistake due to the best intentions.

The King, yielding to force and threats of a general massacre of the clergy, had signed the famous decree called that of the civil constitution of the church in France. This he never ceased bitterly to regret, for this constitution had been rejected by the Pope, while all priests who adhered to it and took this oath were placed under interdict.

A schism then broke out in the French church, which was divided into the "swearing" priests, as they were called, and the orthodox Catholics who refused the forbidden oath. The latter were treated as rebels and subjected to incessant persecution.

The Assembly now demanded the King's signature to a new decree, sentencing all the priests who had refused the oath to be transported.

To this the King opposed a resolute veto. In vain the ministers sent in their resignations, and others made their retention of office conditional on the withdrawal of the King's veto; for the first time Louis XVI was firm, and determined to endure any consequences rather than permit such iniquity.

There was considerable agitation among the populace, and the resolution of "presenting a petition" was adopted by an immense crowd of rioters. On June 20, 1792, the multitude had assembled at five o'clock in the morning on the Place de la Bastille. At noon they had reached the National Assembly, then located at what was called the "Manège" (or

riding-school), situated close to the terrace called "des Feuillants," on the space now devoted to the Rue de Rivoli. The railing which now separates the garden from the street was then represented by a low wall.

The populace, armed with pikes, axes, and butchers' knives, accompanied by women in a state of intoxication, dancing and waving swords, broke into the Assembly, rushed into the garden, and passed before the palace, coming out by the gate opposite to the bridge, and then going round to the side facing the Place du Carrousel. There they burst into the palace, rushing up the great staircase into the Salle des Maréchaux (then called Salle des Cent Suisses). Hearing the noise, Louis XVI resolutely came forward to meet the rioters, passing through the Salon Louis XIV,[1] and remained to receive their onslaught in the Salon d'Apollon.[2] An officer and a few grenadiers then barricaded the door leading to the Salle des Gardes, which the populace had already reached. "Four grenadiers, come to me!" said Louis XVI. One of these said: "Do not be afraid, Sire."

"Put your hand on my heart," exclaimed the King, "and see yourself whether it beats faster."

The poor man was afterward guillotined for having quoted this incident; "thus showing," according to the sentence, "that he had the feelings of a mean lackey of the tyrant."

1 Used habitually as a dining-room under Napoleon III.

2 Where the imperial court under Napoleon III met every evening.

Madame Elisabeth, who had hastened to join her brother, cried aloud, with tears: "Gentlemen, save the King!"

A horrible noise of blows directed against the door was now heard. Axes broke the panels, the door gave way, and the murderous, maddened crowd rushed in. The King met them, undaunted. Seeing Madame Elisabeth, there was a burst of cries: "Death to *the Austrian!*" The friendly spectators quickly exclaimed: "No, no! It is not the Queen. It is Madame Elisabeth!"

"Oh, why undeceive them?" said the heroic Princess. "The mistake might give her time to escape!"

A pike threatened to pierce her; she gently pushed it away, saying: "Take care, monsieur! You might hurt somebody, and I am sure that you would be sorry."

Even the brute whom she addressed was abashed, and the weapon was lowered.

It is related as an example of heroic courage on the part of the great Spanish commander Gonsalvo de Cordova, that on a similar occasion he pushed away a threatening weapon, saying: "Mira que sen querer no me hieras."[1]

This act, quoted as an instance of heroism on the part of a veteran warrior, was thus performed with perfect simplicity and sweet composure by this young royal lady under circumstances of still greater horror and danger.

[1] "Take care lest, without intending it, you should hurt me."

The tumult increased, the noise and threatening cries were terrific. The grenadiers pushed the King into the recess formed by one of the deep windows, and stood before him like a wall of defense, having first placed a barricade of benches.

One of the ruffians who came before him insisted upon his wearing the red cap of liberty, which he consented to place on his head, and then unconsciously retained it, to the great vexation of the royalists.

The tumult lasted till eight o'clock in the evening, when Péthion, then mayor of Paris, succeeded in persuading the crowd to pass through the rooms and leave the King.

The Queen had striven to join him at the first outbreak, but had been forcibly detained by her attendants, who told her that her presence would only exasperate the populace and make the King's position more difficult. Nevertheless, she desperately strove to go to him.

"My place is with the King; I must die by his side," she repeated.

"Your place is with your children," urged the Princesse de Lamballe.

The Queen was forcibly taken to the Salle du Conseil,[1] where the large table used for the councils was put across the room, and the Queen with her children and her faithful ladies were placed behind it.

[1] Salon Louis XIV.

She remained perfectly calm and dignified as the horrible crowd rushed in—the lowest dregs of the Parisian populace, who insulted her in the coarsest terms. She reddened, occasionally her eyes flashed, but through it all she looked them firmly in the face, and remained, as ever, a royal queen.

The women who insulted her could not help admiring the little Dauphin, who sat on the table before her; and the exclamation, "Oh, what a beautiful child!" was heard repeated. One of the viragos cried: "If you love the nation, put the red cap on the head of your son!"

The child was frightened, and clung to his mother; but she smiled to him, and put the cap on his golden curls. Santerre, one of the leaders, softened at the sight of the pretty boy, murmured something about "the heat," and removed it.

One of the women addressed the coarsest abuse to the Queen, and shook her fist in her face.

"What have I done to you?" said Marie-Antoinette.

"Nothing to me, but you have done great injury to the nation."

"You have been told so," said the Queen; "but you have been deceived. I am the wife of your King, the mother of the Dauphin. I have no other country but France, where I must live and die. I was happy here when you loved me."

The woman shed tears, and said: "I was mistaken—forgive me. I see that you are good."

THE DAUPHIN LOUIS-JOSEPH AND HIS SISTER
THE DUCHESSE D'ANGOULÊME.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., N. Y., OF A PAINTING BY MME. VIGÉE LEBRUN,
IN MUSEUM OF VERSAILLES.

Those around her cried that she was under the influence of drink, and she was hustled away.

From time to time Madame Elisabeth found means of informing the Queen that the King was unhurt; but three hours of torture had to be endured before she could join him and be delivered from her persecutors, who left the palace in a state of devastation, with all the rooms and furniture injured, soiled, or destroyed.

During these horrible scenes it is said that a young man, yet unknown to fame, stood on the terrace bordering the river, watching the hideous crowd as it poured out of the palace, and that he exclaimed: "What! have they not even a cannon which could sweep away that *canaille?*" The young man was named Napoleon Bonaparte, and afterward proved that he knew how to use cannon. But, alas! even he could not help the unfortunate Louis XVI.

After the fearful scenes of the 20th of June, one of the ministers, Bertrand de Molleville, had an interview[1] with the King, in which he tendered his congratulations on his escape from the dangers of the preceding day. The King answered in an indifferent tone: "All my anxiety was for the Queen and for my sister; as for myself —"

"But, surely, the insurrection was principally directed against your Majesty?"

"I know it; I saw full well that they wanted to murder me, and I don't know why they did not do it.

[1] June 21, 1792.

But I shall not escape another time, so that I have not gained much. There is no great difference in being murdered two months sooner or later."

"Good heavens, Sire! Does your Majesty really believe so completely in being murdered?"

"Yes, I have expected it for a long time, and I have made up my mind. Do you suppose that I fear death?"

"No, certainly not; but I should wish to see your Majesty less disposed to await death, and more inclined to take vigorous measures, which alone can save the King."

"I believe this, but there are many ill chances to encounter, and I am not a fortunate man. I should not feel any difficulty in coming to a decision if I had not my family with me. I should then prove that I am not so weak as I am supposed to be. But what would become of my wife and children if I did not succeed?"

"But does your Majesty think that if you were murdered your family would be more safe?"

"Yes, I believe it, or at least I hope so; and if things turned out otherwise, I should be spared the self-reproach of being the cause."

It is evident once more that Louis XVI was paralyzed by his fears for those dear to him, and that he would have shown a totally different character if he had been free from family ties around him.

After the horrible experience of the 20th of June, the King and Queen lost all hope, save through the active interference of the European powers, for which, in her letters to her own family the Queen passion-

ately pressed. Lafayette, indignant at the scenes which they had been called upon to endure, left his army and brought to the Assembly a petition with twenty thousand signatures protesting against the insults and violence shown to the King and the royal family. He offered his army to the King, proposing to take them all to Rouen, where they could resist with more chance of success. Unhappily, the King and Queen mistrusted Lafayette, and refused his aid.

Every day brought fresh threats of an attack on the palace, and the ladies of the bedchamber refused to go to bed, watching all night. There were several false alarms; but it was admitted by all that danger was at hand.

On the 9th of August the Assembly received notice that a great insurrection was in preparation for the next day, provoked by the proclamation of the Duke of Brunswick and the threatened invasion of France.

The alarm-bell began to peal at midnight; the Queen and Madame Elisabeth lay down on sofas while waiting for the attack. The Swiss Guards were resolute, and stood in array to defend the palace; the National Guards were also faithful; the Queen began to hope that the rioters might be repulsed. A shot was fired in the courtyard; the Queen rose calmly from her sofa, followed by Madame Elisabeth.

"This is the first shot; it will not be the last. Let us go to the King." At four o'clock the Queen left the King's room, saying that all was lost. Mandat, the faithful commander of the National Guards, had

been murdered, and his head was carried through the streets.

It was now broad daylight; the King, the Queen, Madame Elisabeth, and the royal children went into the garden, and passed through the ranks of the artillerymen stationed there, who showed the worst possible inclinations, even to shaking their fists in the King's face. He was deadly pale, but showed no spirit; and the Queen felt that this sort of review had done more harm than good.

A number of gentlemen belonging to the highest nobility, many of whom were advanced in years, gathered round the King, ready to sacrifice their lives, for they could do little else, being too insufficiently provided with arms.

But while all were in expectation of the final catastrophe, Roederer, the "procureur-syndic," came with several other deputies to entreat the King not to continue useless defense, but to take refuge in the National Assembly as the only means of saving his life and that of the royal family. The Queen vehemently resisted the proposal, but Roederer replied with some sternness that perhaps in a quarter of an hour it would be too late, and that she would be responsible for the lives of the King and all the royal family. "But, Monsieur Roederer," exclaimed the Queen, "will you answer for the lives of the King and of my children if we follow you?"

"Madame," was the reply, "we will die by your side, but we can promise no more."

The Queen then yielded, though reluctantly, and the whole royal party walked through the garden to reach the Assembly, followed by the Princesse de Lamballe and Madame de Tourzel, who was thus obliged to leave her young daughter at the mercy of the rioters. The Princesse de Tarente, one of the Queen's ladies, promised to remain near her, and to take her mother's place as far as possible.

We will not dwell on the horrors of the massacre at the Tuileries. Mademoiselle de Tourzel managed to escape, and in a few days was allowed to join her mother. The princesses had left the palace without being able to take anything with them, and were in want of the commonest necessaries. The Duchesse de Grammont and the wife of the British ambassador, Lady Sutherland, provided the Queen with linen and other requisites.

The Assembly finally decreed the forfeiture of the crown, and assigned to the royal family as a residence the tower belonging to a palace called "Le Temple," which had been used in olden times by the Knights Templars, and had been afterward the property of the Comte d'Artois.

CHAPTER XVII

The three days at Les Feuillants — The royal family removed to the Temple tower — Arrest of the Princesse de Lamballe, and of Madame and Mademoiselle de Tourzel — Madame Elisabeth's gown — Privations and anxieties — Daily life of the royal family — The Queen's dress — The King directs the studies of his son and the Queen those of her daughter — Gross insults and petty vexations.

WHEN the Queen heard that they were to be transferred to the Temple tower she shuddered. She had always felt a particular horror for that building, as if through a presentiment of evil, and had repeatedly begged the Comte d'Artois to pull it down.

The royal family left Les Feuillants for the Temple tower on August 13, the fourth day after they had quitted the Tuileries.[1] The three intervening days had been spent in the so-called "box" (*loge*) used by the journalists of the paper called "Le Logographe," where they were crowded to excess, with their followers, under a low roof formed by the gallery above them, and where they suffered acutely from suffocating heat and want of air to breathe, while they were obliged to hear their future fate discussed by the Assembly, and to learn all

[1] At eight o'clock in the morning of August 10, 1792.

the horrible details of the massacre at the Tuileries. At night they slept in the narrow cells of the building of Les Feuillants, formerly a convent of monks. Some of the faithful attendants had obtained leave to accompany the royal family to the Temple. Mademoiselle de Tourzel was included in the number, the anxiety and grief of the little Dauphin while her fate remained uncertain having touched the hearts of some of the deputies. Madame Campan entreated to be allowed to follow the Queen, but was refused, the number of attendants authorized to remain with the royal prisoners being extremely limited.

At six in the evening one of the large vehicles of the court, such as are unknown at the present time, came to take the King and the royal family to the Temple. The footmen who, for the last time, attended their sovereign, wore gray overcoats concealing their liveries. Several officers of the municipal police accompanied the King and Queen in the large carriage.

The King, the Queen, and the royal children sat facing the horses; opposite were Madame Elisabeth, the Princesse de Lamballe, and Péthion, the Mayor of Paris. Pauline de Tourzel and her mother were at one of the doors, and two municipal officers at the other, the latter keeping on their hats and affecting the most insolent airs. The moment the carriage passed through the gate of Les Feuillants there was a burst of insulting cries from the hostile

crowd, who followed till it reached the Temple—a slow drive of two hours and a half in the midst of insults and threats loudly vociferated.

When they reached the prison they found it illuminated as a sign of public rejoicing; and they were received by members of the Commune, who treated them with the coarsest rudeness.

The Temple prison consisted of one large tower of considerable height, with turrets at the angles; a smaller tower, of lesser height, was annexed, and seemed to form a part of the other one, but was, in fact, separate.

The royal family were at first located in the smaller tower. Each floor comprised two rooms separated by a sort of small anteroom which served as a passage from one to the other. The Queen and her daughter were on the first floor; the Princesse de Lamballe had a bed in the intervening anteroom; and Madame de Tourzel was in the second chamber with the Dauphin. The King was above, with a barrack-room next to his.

There was no bedchamber left for Madame Elisabeth, who was put into a repulsively dirty kitchen. As usual, she showed the most gentle, uncomplaining resignation; and calling Mademoiselle de Tourzel to her side, she simply undertook to "take care of Pauline," for whom she had a bed made up next to her own. The noise of the soldiers in the adjoining room precluded all possibility of sleep.

They rose early the next morning, and going

down-stairs at eight o'clock, found the Queen up and dressed. Her room being the largest and the most cheerful (as it looked upon a garden, though a gloomy one), it was settled that it should be used as a sitting-room; so the whole party remained there during the day, and only went up-stairs to go to bed. But alas! they were never alone; a municipal guard, changed every hour, remained in the room, and thus prevented any private or confidential conversation.

Pauline de Tourzel had of course taken nothing with her from the Tuileries, and had only the torn and stained gown in which she had effected her escape. Madame Elisabeth, having received clothes through the care of some faithful attendants, immediately gave one of her gowns to Pauline; but, of course, what had been made for her own rather fully developed figure could not fit a very young and slender girl. The gown had to be taken to pieces and remade; the Queen, with Madame Elisabeth and the young Madame Royale, worked assiduously to get it ready; but before it was finished the attendants were removed, and only one valet de chambre was allowed to remain.

One of the cooks belonging to the former royal kitchen, a man named Meunier, with one of his assistants called Turgy, had contrived to get appointed to the same functions in the Temple by carefully concealing their real feelings and acting a "patriotic" part. Meunier remained to the last; consequently the food was carefully prepared, and, especially at

first, extremely good, till restrictions were exacted. The royal party dined in a room below the Queen's bedchamber. After dinner, at about five o'clock, they went into the garden to give air and exercise to the young people, of course followed by guards and treated with contumely, which they did not seem to notice.

Next to the dining-room was a fairly good library, which was a great comfort to the King especially. For several days they were thus comparatively quiet; but on the night between the 18th and 19th of August they were roused at twelve o'clock, while Madame de Lamballe and Madame and Mademoiselle de Tourzel were arrested with all the other attendants. The Queen and Madame Elisabeth rose hastily and dressed quickly, while the latter assisted Pauline in getting ready. The Queen tried in vain to retain Madame de Lamballe, pleading that she was a member of the family. But all were removed together, to the intense grief of the Queen and Madame Elisabeth, who embraced them with tears. They were never again to see the Princesse de Lamballe!

The three principal ladies were taken to the prison of La Force, where in a few days they received a box from the Queen,— who sent word that she had packed it herself,— containing divers necessaries, the before mentioned gown given by Madame Elisabeth, and half a large piece of English flannel,[1] which the Queen "hoped might be a comfort."

[1] Probably sent to the Queen by Lady Sutherland, English manufactures being forbidden.

"Even in her own most dire necessities she never forgot what might be useful or agreeable to others," says Madame de Tourzel on this occasion.

The royal party suffered greatly from anxiety in regard to the fate of those who had been taken from them. "None of us slept on the night of the separation," writes Madame Royale.[1] The mere privation of attendance mattered little; the Queen took the little Dauphin into her room and dressed him herself. Having asked Cléry, the valet attached to the King's person, whether he could dress her hair, she accepted his services on his affirmative reply, and while engaged in this daily task, he was often able to give her information which she wished to have, Madame Elisabeth meanwhile taking care to converse with the guard to divert his attention.

After the Queen had dressed the Dauphin, she made him kneel to say his prayers, with a particular remembrance for Madame de Tourzel and Madame de Lamballe. A woman called Tison, with her husband, had been appointed nominally to help in the menial work, but more particularly to play the part of spy on the royal family; the Queen did not accept their services personally, either for herself or her son.

The King rose at seven, and when dressed went into the turret adjoining his bedchamber while the latter was being put in order, and remained engaged

1 "Récit des événements arrivés au Temple," par la Duchesse d'Angoulême.

in prayer and religious reading till nine. The Queen, who rose earlier than the King, began the day with her religious duties; she then dressed the Dauphin, and was ready herself by eight o'clock. At nine all joined the King for breakfast; but the happiness of meeting after the short separation of the night was much alloyed by the constant presence of a municipal guard, who never left them alone, and was relieved every hour. After breakfast the Dauphin took lessons with his father, and Madame Royale with her mother. There was an old harpsichord which enabled them to continue the study of music; and an attentive royalist had sent drawings of heads for the young Princess to copy. The library provided books for historical reading. The King delighted to have books, read what were at his disposal, but more particularly the reign of Charles I, in Hume's "History of England."

The lessons lasted till eleven; the children then played together in the anteroom with Cléry; often Madame Elisabeth took advantage of the noise of battledore and shuttlecock, etc., to exchange a few words with him in a half whisper, and to hear what news he had to give them.

At noon the Queen, in accordance with old habit, changed her morning-dress of white dimity, with a plain lawn cap, for another of linen spotted with small flowers on a brown ground.

To effect the change she passed into Madame Elisabeth's room. The royal party then went into

the garden, where in a shady walk under horse-chestnut trees the children played at ball, etc., with Cléry. The necessity of air and exercise for their health induced the King and Queen to submit patiently to the multiplied insults of the guards, who smoked in their faces, uttered brutal jests, drew offensive caricatures on the wall, and sang revolutionary songs. Sometimes there were sympathetic signals or significant songs from the neighboring houses; but a high wall was being built as quickly as possible to prevent such demonstrations. These walks in the garden were the most trying time of the day, and were endured only for the sake of the children. In the interior of the tower some more humane guards left them in comparative peace. The Queen, although not entirely spared, yet commanded some degree of respect which was not granted to the King, whose homely manners and appearance were entirely devoid of that prestige which is so necessary to those in a position of authority. The majestic air, the grave reserve, and the gentle sweetness shown by the Queen impressed the guards with a sort of awe, increased when any offense lighted up her flashing eye, or directed the truly royal glance which they could not meet unabashed. Some even felt the influence of the attraction which was so marked a feature in any personal intercourse with Marie-Antoinette.

At two o'clock the royal family returned to the tower for their dinner, where everything was mi-

nutely examined, to prevent the possibility of any correspondence being introduced, before they were allowed to partake of the food.

The Queen ate little, but very slowly, to give the King time to satisfy his hearty appetite, which was a subject of derision for the guards. The food was good and abundant. The King drank wine mixed with water, and took a small glass of liqueur after dinner; the princesses drank only water, and after some difficulty had obtained that of the Ville d'Avray fountain, to which they were accustomed. Their former servants, now employed in the Temple kitchen, did all in their power to procure them what they wished.

After dinner the Queen played with the King at backgammon or piquet, and seized the opportunity of thus saying a few words under cover of the game. When it was finished the King dozed in his chair for a short time; the children respected the respite from care brought by this friendly slumber, and every one remained silent and quiet. The Queen often dropped her tapestry-work on her knees, and gazed at the sleeper with a particularly sad expression. When he woke occupations were resumed: studies for the young people, books and needlework for the others.

In the evening all gathered round a table while the Queen read aloud. The little Dauphin took his supper separately, and was put to bed, the Queen hearing him say his prayers, and undressing him

herself. At nine the general supper was served; the Queen and Madame Elisabeth remained with the Dauphin on alternate evenings during that time, Cléry bringing what was required to the watcher of the evening.

The King retired early; before leaving the room he took his wife's hand in his, and held it for a moment without any other demonstration. The Queen, glad to shorten her sleepless nights as far as possible, remained with Madame Elisabeth, who often read to her from some devotional book, or assisted her in mending the clothes of the King and the Dauphin.

The life which they thus led seemed to bring relief after the horrible scenes which they had witnessed and the royal party were resigned: the more so as they indulged in delusive hopes of deliverance through the invasion of France by the allied powers. Their blindness was extraordinary, for mere common sense would seem to indicate that, as hostages in the hands of an infuriated people, the progress of the invaders, with whom their name was connected, could only increase their own danger.

CHAPTER XVIII

Horrible death of the Princesse de Lamballe — Ferocity of the mob — Savage incident at the Temple tower — Effect on the Queen — The King removed to the large tower — Distress of the Queen — Removal of the whole royal family to the large tower — The King's trial announced — Separation from his family.

THE comparative quiet which the prisoners enjoyed was, however, not to be of long duration. Bad news came to Paris. The French were repulsed, the invaders were advancing, Longwy was taken, Verdun about to surrender. The whole population seemed then to become a prey to a sort of frenzy.

The prisons, churches, convents, hospitals, and also the private dwellings of those suspected of royalist or religious sympathy, were broken open, and a general massacre began, with details of incredible ferocity. Not only did the so-called government attempt no repression, but the murderers were actually rewarded for their patriotism!

The King and royal family, although subjected to the threats of some of the municipal guards, had but imperfect information of what was going on, and spent the night between the 2d and 3d of

MARIE-THÉRÈSE-LOUISE DE SAVOIE-CARIGNAN
PRINCESSE DE LAMBALLE.

ENGRAVED BY PETER AITKEN FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., N. Y., OF A PAINTING
BY LOUIS-ÉDOUARD RIOULT, IN MUSEUM OF VERSAILLES

September in great anxiety, but of an undefined kind, without imagining the shock in store for them. The Queen had anxiously asked Manuel, a member of the Commune, for news of Madame de Lamballe; he had evasively answered that she was safe at the Hôtel de La Force, but without saying that he alluded to the prison of that name, thus leaving the hope to the Queen that it was the private house of the "de La Force" family.

On September 3 there was a great noise in the streets about the Temple, and the municipal guards would not allow the habitual recreation in the garden.

The dinner took place as usual, and the Queen was about to begin the customary game of cards or backgammon with the King, when a terrific noise was heard under the window, and the Queen seemed to hear her own name, with that of *Lamballe.* She started up, and stood terrified and motionless, as Cléry came in pale as death.

"Why are you not at dinner?" asked the Queen, in breathless anxiety.

"Madame, I am not well," answered Cléry, who, alas! had seen the head of the Princesse de Lamballe carried on a pike, and had hastened up-stairs to warn the King.

The face of the unfortunate Princess had been rouged, and her hair frizzed and powdered, by a wretched hair-dresser, who nearly died with the horror of his ghastly task, inflicted by the populace,

"that Antoinette might recognize her friend"! The long, fair hair of the victim fell in curls round the pike.

The municipal guards near the Queen were speaking together, with much agitation, in low whispers.

"What is the matter?" asked the King.

"You had better go to the window," said one of the guards.

The King moved as if about to do so, when another guard threw himself before him, saying in imploring tones:

"No! no! For mercy's sake, do not go! do not show yourself!"

"But what is all this?" said the King.

"Well, if you want to know," said a young officer, with coarse brutality, "it is the head of the Lamballe that they wish to show you. If you don't want the people to come up here, you had better go to the window."

The Queen stood with fixed gaze, without uttering a sound, as if she had been turned into stone. Madame Elisabeth flew to her, and drew her into a chair, while her children knelt by her side weeping, and striving to rouse her. At length a flood of tears brought relief to the alarming stupor which had seemed to annihilate her senses.

The King then turned to the brutal officer who had caused the fearful shock.

"We are prepared for everything, monsieur; but you might have spared the Queen the knowledge of this frightful calamity."

The unfortunate Princess, who was at the La Force prison with Madame and Mademoiselle de Tourzel, had been massacred in the courtyard of the prison by the mob, who literally cut her corpse to pieces, with details of savage brutality impossible to relate, and beyond what imagination could conceive. The head was cut off, placed on a pike, and carried in triumph through the streets to the Temple, for the purpose of being shown to the Queen because she was her friend!

Madame and Mademoiselle de Tourzel escaped after many dramatic incidents, the coolness and courage shown by the young girl having interested a member of the Commune more humane than the others.

Until the shock of the dreadful death of Madame de Lamballe the Queen had preserved her habitual energy, and even cheerfulness, not only uttering no complaint, but trying to encourage all around her. After that event she lived in a state of terror, not for herself, but for those she loved. She had seen what unlimited ferocity might be expected from the populace, and had learned that the walls of a prison did not suffice as a protection. Daily the crowd assembled under the windows of the Temple, demanding with loud cries the heads of Louis and Antoinette! Had the danger menaced only herself, she would have steadily faced assassins, as she had done before; but the horrors of a general massacre, in which her husband and children might perish before her eyes, were too much even for her for-

titude; and when, on September 29, the delegates of the Commune came to read the decree by which "Louis Capet," as he was now called, was to be at once removed to the large tower, where his dwelling was ready for him, leaving the rest of the family in their present abode, the Queen fell into a state of absolute despair, being convinced that he was being taken away to be murdered there.

She spent the whole night in tears and sobs; in the morning she refused all food, and implored the municipal guards, with such passionate entreaties, for permission to see the King, if only at meals, that finally this last favor was granted, with a promise that they should all be transferred to the great tower as soon as the rooms could be made ready.

They met meanwhile, but only at meals, and invariably subjected to the inspection of the guards, who never left them. Madame Elisabeth, having said a few words to her brother in English, was peremptorily informed that she must not use a foreign language. On October 26 they were transferred to the great tower, where the King lodged on the second floor with Cléry and the Dauphin, who was thus taken from his mother at night — a great sacrifice for Marie-Antoinette, but to which she was resigned, hoping that it might procure comfort to the King.

Her own bedchamber and that of Madame Elisabeth were on the third floor, and Madame Royale slept on a small bed near her mother. The rooms,

though barely furnished, contained what was strictly necessary, and the Queen had a fairly good bed. Near them, on pretense of service, but literally as a constant watch kept over them, were Tison and his wife, already mentioned, who had filled the same office in the smaller tower, and now followed them to their new abode. But, far more than before, everything here revealed a prison, with its hoodwinked windows, iron bars, and iron-bound doors, its formidable locks and massive keys. The rooms were dark and gloomy, without any look-out, and even the bright little Dauphin seemed depressed and sad.

The prisoners had vainly asked for divine service at least on Sundays and festivals. It was refused, but the King read the prayers and gospels of the day with the royal family. Their daily life was continued as before described, but no kind of annoyance was spared them by the so-called government. A first decree took from them pens, ink, paper, and pencils; a second, all penknives or sharp instruments, even to their toilet implements and those used for their needlework.

One day Louis XVI stood mournfully watching Madame Elisabeth, who was mending his coat, and biting off the thread with her teeth, her scissors having been taken away.

"You wanted for nothing in your pretty house at Montreuil!"

"Oh, my brother," she earnestly replied, "how

could I think of myself when I remember and share your misfortunes!"

At this time the King was thirty-eight years of age; the Queen completed her thirty-seventh year on the 2d of November; Madame Elisabeth was twenty-eight, Madame Royale nearly fourteen, and the Dauphin was seven years old.

The festive time of Christmas and the New Year brought only fresh sorrows to the prisoners. On the 6th of December Cléry heard that the King's trial was about to take place, and that during its course he would be separated from the Queen and the rest of his family. Cléry had the painful duty of preparing the King for this new ordeal, and performed it as gently as he could while undressing his master, who had only four days before him to concert with the Queen some means of correspondence. On the 11th of December there was a great noise in the streets of Paris. The drums beat the call to arms, and troops came into the garden of the Temple, to the great alarm of the prisoners.

The royal family breakfasted together as usual, but the vigilance of the guards was so acute that they were utterly unable to exchange even a word in private. What the torture of this incessant supervision must have been may be imagined. After breakfast the King went down-stairs with his son for his usual lessons; but at eleven o'clock two municipal guards came to take away the Dauphin, who was to go to his mother. They vouchsafed no

explanation to the King, who remained in great anxiety as to the meaning of this new decision.

At one o'clock came a deputation from the National Convention, who read to the King a decree ordering that "Louis Capet" should be brought to the bar of the National Convention. The King replied that his name was not "Capet," which belonged to one of his ancestors,[1] and that in following them he yielded to force, and not to their orders.

When the Queen knew that the King was gone her alarm may be imagined. "We were all," says Madame Royale, "in a state of anxiety which it is impossible to describe. My mother had tried every means of learning what was going on through the municipal guards; it was the first time that she condescended to question them." After the melancholy dinner, Cléry contrived to follow Madame Elisabeth, and to warn her that during the trial the King would not be allowed to see his family. He tried to encourage the Princess to hope that the King would be sent into exile. Madame Elisabeth replied: "I have no hope that the King may be saved!" At six o'clock Cléry was summoned to receive the information that he would no longer be allowed communication with the princesses and the Dauphin, as he was to remain with Louis XVI.

At half-past six the King returned, and earnestly requested to be allowed to see his family, but in vain. Henceforward the royal prisoner remained alone.

[1] Hugh Capet, King of France from 987 to 996.

The Dauphin was with the Queen. "My brother," says Madame Royale, "spent the night with her. As he had no bed, she gave him her own, and sat up all night so absorbed in grief that my aunt and myself would not leave her."

In vain Marie-Antoinette, when morning came, entreated to be allowed to see her husband. She was never to see him again in this world save once — on the eve of his execution!

CHAPTER XIX

The King's trial — Malesherbes a faithful friend — A sad Christmas — How the royal family corresponded with the King — The New Year — The King's sentence — His last requests — A reprieve of three days refused — Farewell interview with his family — The Abbé Edgeworth de Firmont.

THE King was told that he might choose counsel for his defense, and the now aged Malesherbes, who had been minister many years before, offered his faithful services to the King in his adversity. He was assisted by Tronchet and de Sèze, whose names deserve to be recalled, for the honor that they accepted was one which implied the probable sacrifice of their lives.[1]

When the King saw Malesherbes, he went quickly to meet him, and embraced him warmly, while the old man burst into bitter tears on seeing the condition of his master, who, perhaps, would not have met with such a lamentable fate if Malesherbes and Turgot had been allowed to carry out the wise and prudent measures which might have prevented so much evil.

Meanwhile Marie-Antoinette could not be com-

[1] Malesherbes died on the scaffold, with several members of his family. The other advocates survived the Revolution.

forted for the separation from the King, which she had so much dreaded, and to which she must now submit. She remained in a sort of mute despair, hardly speaking even to her children, on whom she gazed with an expression of grief which deeply affected them, young as they were. She tried incessantly to procure some information from the guards, who answered with great caution; some, nevertheless, showed compassion, and endeavored to encourage her to hope.

In the midst of all this moral torture came Christmas day, without even the possibility of prayer in a place of religious worship. They read the service of the day, but this was a poor substitute.

The King chose this solemn Christian festival to express his last wishes to his wife and family, and his justification as a farewell to his people. We will give only a short extract from this remarkable document: "I entreat my wife to forgive me all that she has to suffer for my sake, and whatever sorrow I may have caused her during the years of our marriage, as she may rest assured that I retain no remembrance of anything for which she might be inclined to feel self-reproach. I charge my son, in case that he should ever have the misfortune of being a king, to remember that he must be entirely devoted to the happiness of his fellow-citizens, that he must forget all rancor or hatred, more especially with regard to the misfortunes and sorrows to which I am subjected."

The truly Christian feelings of the King are sufficiently proved by the above extract from the paper which was addressed to the Queen, but not given to her.

On January 1 poor Cléry drew near, and diffidently asked leave to express his wishes for the King's future happiness. The King kindly and sadly accepted them, sending messages to his family through a municipal guard. They had found means to communicate with him, assisted by Cléry and Turgy, one of their former servants, who was employed in the kitchen, and who contrived to put stoppers of twisted white paper in the bottles and decanters taken up to them. With these fragments and a bit of pencil, carefully concealed, the Queen and Madame Elisabeth contrived to write a few words, covered over by thread, closely wound. Another thread dropped the pieces of paper by the window down to that of the King, where Cléry took them and fastened others, which were drawn up to the Queen's window. This was done at night, to escape the scrutiny of the guards.

Turgot and Malesherbes came also to offer their hopeful good wishes on the occasion of the New Year; but the King, with characteristic kindness, would not allow them to remain with him, reminding them that they had family claims which must not be neglected. "You especially, my dear Malesherbes, who have three generations behind you; I could not forgive myself if I took you away from them."

One of the municipal guards, who had been conquered by the King's patience and kindness, addressed him, saying: "Sire, you have been King of the French, and you can still make me happy."

"But I can do nothing for you," said the King.

"Forgive me, Sire; the least trifle having belonged to you would be very precious to me." The King then gave him his gloves as a remembrance.

The trial was over — all the eloquence of the King's advocates could not save his life; a majority of only seven votes decided his fate, and thus "Louis Capet" was sentenced to death!

Malesherbes, in deep distress, went to the Temple, and as Cléry hastily came forward to meet him he told him that all was over and that the King was sentenced. As Malesherbes came into the King's presence the latter said to him: "For the last two hours I have been examining my conscience and seeking whether, during the course of my reign, I have voluntarily given my subjects any just cause for complaint against me. Well, I can declare in all the sincerity of my soul, as a man about to appear before God, that I have constantly striven for the happiness of my people, and that I have not indulged in a single wish contrary to it."

This was too much for Malesherbes, who fell on his knees, sobbing so as to be unable to speak. The King tried to comfort him, saying that he had expected what such grief announced, and that it was better to know his fate.

The three counsel urged him to try an appeal to the nation; he consented reluctantly, being convinced that it would be useless. De Sèze and Tronchet then retired, but the King detained Malesherbes, who was still overcome with grief. "My friend, do not weep," he said, pressing his hand. "We shall meet again in a better world. I am grieved to leave such a friend as you are." The King followed him to the door with another "Adieu!" They met no more, although Malesherbes came again and again to the prison entreating for admittance, which was refused to the last.

The King then took up the "History of England" and read assiduously the trial and death of Charles I. The King's appeal to the nation was rejected through a motion of Robespierre, and on the 20th of January a deputation from the National Convention came to read the sentence, which was to be carried out within twenty-four hours. Louis XVI listened with perfect calmness, and then gave into the hands of the members a letter addressed to the Convention, in which he asked a reprieve of three days to prepare for death; the assistance of a priest of his own faith, with a guarantee that this priest should incur no danger by his ministrations; permission to see his family without witnesses; and the assurance that after his death the survivors would be left free to go where they pleased. He also recalled the claims of his former servants, creditors, and others.

The so-called Minister of Justice having undertaken to deliver this letter to the Board of the National Convention, the King gave the name of the Abbé Edgeworth de Firmont as that of the priest whom he wished to see. The deputation then retired, and the King's dinner was brought as usual.

With perfect self-possession Louis XVI sat down to his meal. "I have no knife," he remarked. He was then told that he was not to be allowed the use of a knife or a fork, and that his food was to be cut up by Cléry in the presence of the two guards, who would then remove the knife. The King showed some indignation at the implied supposition that he could be "so cowardly" as to have the intention of putting an end to his own life; and then merely breaking off a piece of bread, he detached with a spoon a few mouthfuls of boiled beef, which he took, but would not allow his food to be cut up, and did not partake of anything else. The meal was over in a few minutes.

At six o'clock the Minister of Justice returned to the Temple, and announced that the King would be allowed to have any priest that he preferred, and to see his family freely and alone; that the Convention had not taken into consideration his request for a reprieve of three days; that the nation, "always great and just," would settle what concerned his family, and give proper satisfaction to his creditors. To this the King made no reply.

The guards then asked the minister privately how

they were to reconcile the permission given to the King to see his family alone, and the orders of the Convention that the guards were not to lose sight of him by day or by night. It was then settled that the King should receive his family in the dining-room, where the door would be shut, but where they could be watched through its glass panes.

The King then asked for the Abbé Edgeworth, who was down-stairs and came up immediately. When he saw the King he was deeply affected, and threw himself at his feet without being able to utter a word. The King was greatly moved at the sight of a faithful subject, and then took the Abbé into the turret, where they were allowed to be alone and remained long in earnest conversation. At eight o'clock the King came out of the turret, and desired that his family should be summoned; then with Cléry he went into the dining-room, where Cléry pushed the table into a corner, to give more room, and placed chairs in readiness. The King, ever thoughtful and considerate in what concerned the Queen, then desired Cléry to bring a decanter of water and a glass, in case of need. Cléry brought iced water, but the King immediately said that it might make the Queen ill, and asked for water without ice.

The Queen, holding the little Dauphin by the hand, came in first, followed by Madame Elisabeth with Madame Royale. All had learned the dreadful truth through the cries of the news-venders under their windows! With floods of tears the Queen threw

herself into the King's arms, and then attempted to draw him into his bedchamber; but he explained that he could receive them all only in the dining-room, where the guards could watch them through the glass door. Cléry closed it, and they could at least speak without being heard. The King sat down; the Queen took her place at his left, with Madame Elisabeth on the other side; the children were before him. All clung to him, and for some time only a burst of grief was manifest. At last the King spoke.

"He wept for us,"—says Madame Royale, in her narrative,—"but not through fear of death; he related his trial to my mother, excusing the wretches who were about to put him to death. . . . He then addressed religious exhortations to my brother; he especially commanded him to forgive those who were the cause of his death, and gave him his blessing, as also to me."

The child was seen to raise his hand solemnly, the King having required him to take an oath that he would never seek to avenge his death.

During the last hours of his life, Louis XVI seemed transfigured. His quiet and calm firmness, his truly Christian feelings of forgiveness toward his enemies, his faith, his resignation, are described with blended wonder and admiration by all who came near him.

The interview, so harrowing to all, had lasted nearly two hours, when, at a quarter past ten, the

LOUIS XVI.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO. N. Y., OF THE PAINTING BY ANTOINE-FRANÇOIS CALLET, IN MUSEUM OF VERSAILLES.

King rose decidedly, signifying to the weeping women and children that they must leave him to prepare for coming death. The Queen entreated to be allowed to spend the night near him, but he firmly refused, saying that he must be alone and calm.

"I will see you to-morrow morning," he said.

"You promise this?" cried the Queen.

"Yes, I promise; I will see you at eight o'clock."

"Why not at seven?" cried the Queen, anxiously.

"Well, then, at seven; but now adieu!"

The word was uttered with such intense pathos that a fresh burst of grief followed, and Madame Royale fainted at her father's feet. Cléry flew to raise her, assisted by Madame Elisabeth. The King repeated, "Adieu! Adieu!" and broke away, taking refuge in his own bedchamber. The princesses, still sobbing violently, went upstairs. Cléry tried to follow, and to assist in taking up the still unconscious Madame Royale; but the guards forced him to desist.

The King, as soon as he had recovered sufficient self-command, returned to the Abbé Edgeworth, with whom he remained in spiritual converse till midnight. The Abbé had obtained permission to say mass on the following morning in the King's bedchamber, and had procured what was necessary from a neighboring church. But he was warned that all must be over by seven o'clock, because "Louis would be taken to execution at eight."

The King then went to bed, and fell into the deep sleep of physical exhaustion.

CHAPTER XX

The King prepares for death — His kindness to the last — He hears mass and receives communion — The Abbé Edgeworth persuades him to give up the last interview with the Queen and royal family — He bids farewell to Cléry — His last words to the porter of the prison — A fruitless attempt to save him on his way to the scaffold — He prepares for his execution — His address to the people — His death.

AT five o'clock in the morning the King was awakened by Cléry, who was lighting the fire, and he immediately asked for the Abbé Edgeworth. Cléry replied that he was lying on his bed; and the King, thoughtful for others to the last, then asked quickly where he had slept himself. When Cléry answered, "On that chair, Sire," his ever-kind master exclaimed, "I am sorry!" He then desired Cléry to summon the Abbé, and going with him into the turret, they remained in converse for an hour, while Cléry prepared what was necessary for the mass.

With the same perfect calmness which he had shown throughout, the King asked Cléry if he could serve the mass; he replied in the affirmative, but said that he did not know the responses by heart. The King took a missal, looked out the places, and gave

it to his faithful valet, taking another for himself. Then, kneeling devoutly, he heard the mass and received communion. When the Abbé retired to remove his vestments after mass, the King affectionately took leave of poor Cléry, who was heart-broken, and thanked him for his faithful service.

A great deal of noise was now heard round the prison, and cavalry regiments were coming into the court-yard. The King said quietly: "They are probably assembling the National Guards. The time is drawing near." He then saw that it was seven o'clock, and spoke of summoning the Queen and royal family, according to his promise; but the Abbé earnestly dissuaded him on the ground of the harrowing nature of such an interview at such a time. The King hesitated for a moment, and then said with resignation that he felt it would be too distressing for the Queen, and that it was better to be deprived himself of this last comfort, so as to leave her a few minutes more of delusive hope. He then summoned Cléry and gave into his hands a small packet for the Queen, containing a seal for the Dauphin, and his wedding-ring,[1] with the hair of different members of the royal family. "Tell her that I do not part with the ring without pain. Tell the Queen, tell my dear children, tell my sister, that although I had promised to see them this morning, I have wished to spare them the sorrow of such a separation. It is a great sacrifice for me to go with-

[1] In France men also have wedding-rings.

out embracing them once more! I charge you to give them my last farewell."

One of the guards came up to the King. "You have asked for scissors; we must know with what intention."

"I wish Cléry to cut my hair."

After deliberation the request was refused!

At nine o'clock the door opened noisily, and Santerre came in, followed by ten gendarmes, who stood in two lines.

"You have come to fetch me?" said the King.

"Yes," answered Santerre.

"In one minute I will follow you." He then went into the turret, knelt before the priest, and asked for his blessing, and his prayers that divine support might be granted to the end.

Louis XVI then left the turret, and came toward the guards, who filled the room. Addressing one of these, he held a folded paper, which he requested that he would give to the Queen — "to my wife," he quickly added, correcting the expression.

"That is no concern of mine," said the man brutally; "I am here to take you to the scaffold."

The King turned to another: "I beg that you will give this paper to my wife. You may read it; there are some wishes expressed, which I should be glad that the Commune should know."

The man took the paper — but the Queen never received it. The King then asked Cléry for his hat, and spoke of his faithful servant, requesting

that his watch should be given to him, and that henceforward he should serve "the Queen — my wife."

No answer was made. The King[1] then said firmly, addressing Santerre, "Let us go." The Abbé followed him as he went down-stairs. On meeting the porter of the prison, the King said: "I spoke to you sharply the other day; do not bear me ill-will."

The man made no reply, and looked away. The King crossed the first courtyard of the prison on foot, and turned twice to look up at the closed windows where wooden shutters prevented him from seeing those he loved. In the second courtyard was a hackney-coach, near which stood two gendarmes. The King and his confessor took the two seats facing the horses, the gendarmes took the seats opposite, and the coach immediately drove off.

It was a dark, misty January morning. The presence of the two soldiers precluded the possibility of conversation; the priest therefore handed his breviary to the King, and pointed out appropriate psalms, which the King read devoutly and with perfect calmness, to the evident astonishment of the gendarmes. The shops were shut along the way, and crowds of armed citizens stood on the pavement as the coach, preceded and followed by cavalry and artillery, went slowly through the streets, where all the windows were closed. Lines of troops stood on

[1] No mention is made of any food taken by the King, or even offered to him; he seems to have gone to the scaffold fasting.

each side, while drums beat solemnly, as if for a military funeral.

As the coach passed along the Boulevards near the Porte St. Denis, a few young men rushed forward, waving swords and crying loudly: "Come, all who would save the King!" There was no response, and they were obliged to fly for their own lives.

They were pursued, and several were arrested, with fatal consequences. The King, absorbed in prayer and religious meditation, had not even perceived the vain attempt to effect his deliverance.

The coach had at last reached the Rue Royale and the Place de la Révolution,[1] where the crowd was immense. The scaffold was a little to the left of the site where the Obelisk now stands, but nearer the Champs Elysées, toward which the guillotine was turned.[2]

A mass of troops formed a square around the fatal spot. The coach stopped at a distance of a few paces. The King, feeling that the motion had ceased, looked up from his prayer-book, saying quietly: "We have reached the place, I think."

One of the executioner's assistants opened the door.

[1] Now the Place de la Concorde.

[2] As the mechanism of the guillotine may not be understood by the reader, a few words of explanation seem necessary. The condemned stands before an upright board hinged between two posts. To this he is securely bound; the board then *turns down*, bringing him to a horizontal position, with the neck in a half-hoop of wood, of which the remaining half comes down to meet the other, securing the head. The knife then falls mechanically on the neck. The whole is managed with extreme rapidity.

The King earnestly commended the priest who accompanied him to the care of the gendarmes, and then stepped from the coach.

Three men surrounded him and tried to take off his coat. He calmly pushed them back and removed it himself, opening his shirt-collar and preparing it for the knife. The executioners, who seemed at first disconcerted and almost awed, then again came around him, holding a rope.

The King drew back quickly, exclaiming: "What do you want to do?"

"To tie your hands."

The King exclaimed indignantly: "Tie my hands! No, I will not submit to this. Do your duty, but do not attempt to bind me; you shall not do it!"

The executioners persisted, and spoke loudly. The King looked toward the Abbé Edgeworth, who at once saw the impossibility of resistance, and said gently: "Sire, this last insult will only provide a fresh point of resemblance between your Majesty and the God who will be your recompense."

The King looked up to heaven. "Assuredly, His example alone could induce me to submit to such an indignity." Then holding out his hands: "Do as you please; I will drink the cup to the dregs."

His hands were tied, and with the assistance of his confessor he ascended the steps of the scaffold, which were very steep. When he reached the top he broke away from the Abbé, walked firmly across the scaffold, silenced the drums by a glance of authority,

and then in a voice so loud that it was audible on the opposite side of the Place de la Révolution, he uttered these words:

"I die innocent of all the crimes imputed to me. I forgive those who have caused my death, and I pray God that the blood you are about to shed may never fall on France."

There was a shudder that ran through the crowd like a great wave; but, at the word of command, the drums beat a prolonged roll, and the voice could no longer be heard. The King, seeing that all further address to the crowd would be fruitless, turned to the guillotine and calmly took his place on the fatal plank, to which he was fastened. The apparatus turned over, and the knife fell.[1] It was then a quarter past ten o'clock A. M. on the 21st of January, 1793. The executioner held up the severed head, turning as he did so to the four sides of the Place.

The King of France was dead.

"Le roi est mort!" But no one dared to cry the traditional response:

"Vive le roi!"

"Le roi!" The heir to the once glorious title was now a poor little child, weeping bitterly, in a prison, by the side of his widowed mother.

[1] To my regret, I have found no mention in the narrative of the Abbé Edgeworth, or of others, of the famous words attributed to him: "Son of St. Louis, ascend to heaven!"

CHAPTER XXI

Grief of the Queen — She remains in the closest seclusion — The Dauphin is taken away from the Queen — Her desperate resistance — The Princesses left without attendance — They perform menial work and wait on the Queen — She is removed to the Conciergerie prison — Madame Richard — Narrative of her servant, Rosalie Lamorlière — Arrival of the Queen — Her cell — The child of Madame Richard.

THE unhappy Queen had spent the night lying on her bed, without undressing, incessantly "sobbing and shuddering with grief," says Madame Royale. The morning passed in the horrible expectation of the coming sorrow, supposing every minute that the door was about to open for the summons to the last farewell. Seven o'clock — eight — nine, and still no message. They heard the noise of horses and troops, but still the mourners hoped for the last word, the last look. Then all was silent. They scarcely dared to acknowledge what they feared; but after a period of agonized suspense they heard the public criers proclaim that all was over. The Queen then entreated to be allowed to see Cléry, hoping to learn from him what had taken place, why she had not seen the King, what messages

he had left for her, for his children, for his sister. This was refused!

One of the municipal guards, however, who was more humane and compassionate than the others, managed to see Cléry, to gather all particulars from his lips, and to transmit them to the Queen, for whom he also procured newspapers, which the family were able to read secretly.

The Queen was in a state of absolute prostration, from which she was roused, in some measure, by the serious illness of her daughter. "Happily," says the young Princess, with pathetic simplicity — "*happily*, I became so ill, that her thoughts were diverted from her grief in some measure." Mourning attire had been granted at the earnest request of the bereaved family; but nothing could induce the Queen to go down-stairs into the garden; not even for the sake of her children's health, after the recovery of the young Princess. To reach the garden, it was impossible to avoid passing before the door of the King's apartment, which was immediately under her own; and this she could not endure. After several weeks of close seclusion, some of the kinder guards suggested that the royal family should go to the top of the tower, and take the air on a sort of circular walk, which existed between the conical summit and the parapet bordering the roof. To this the Queen consented; but she could never be persuaded to go down-stairs to the garden. Meanwhile, with the obstinate adherence to royalist traditions which

at that time seemed a duty as sacred as that of a profession of religious faith, she treated her son, as King of France, with the etiquette which had been used by the royal family toward Louis XVI, even in the prison. This was more than imprudent, under the circumstances of her situation, which she would not or could not understand, still preserving her delusions, still convinced that they would all be delivered by the interference of the allied powers. She never dreamed of being subjected to a judicial trial, like the King; the only possible danger seemed to be that of a massacre in the prison.

Her royalist adherents, who foresaw more clearly what would probably be her fate, formed many plans for the escape of the Queen and royal family, with the connivance of some of the guards, who were won over either by real sympathy for the royal prisoners or by promises of a rich reward. But the spies placed near them—Tison and his wife—were on the watch, and perpetually gave warning of what they saw or suspected, causing all plans to fail, through some unforeseen complication, at the very time when success seemed within reach. These attempts only caused increased vexation to the prisoners, who were perpetually subjected to domiciliary visits, and were repeatedly searched, when everything that could be taken from them was carried away.

The respect shown to the boy-King irritated those who governed at that time, and they were further exasperated by the insurrection which had broken out

in La Vendée, where Louis XVII was styled king. Thenceforward the poor child's fate was sealed. On the night of July 3 of that miserable year, the guards appeared at ten o'clock bearing a decree by which it was ordered that "the son of Louis Capet" should be separated from his mother, and given into the hands of a "tutor,"[1] who would be appointed by the Commune.

The scene that followed is one of the most harrowing recorded in history. The terrified child uttered loud cries and entreaties, clinging desperately to his mother, who knew only too well into what hands he was about to fall, and what would be his fate. She refused to give him up, and defended him with the strength of despair, telling them to kill her before taking her son from her. A whole hour passed thus — in desperate resistance on the part of Marie-Antoinette, in threats and violence on the part of the guards, in tears and supplications from Madame Elisabeth and Madame Royale. At last the guards declared so positively that they would kill both of her children, that the Queen, exhausted, ceased her resistance. Madame Elisabeth and Madame Royale then took up the child from his little bed, and dressed him—for the Queen was powerless. When ready, she gave him herself, into the hands of the guards, with floods of tears, "foreseeing," says Madame Royale, "that she would never see him

[1] This so-called "tutor" was the cobbler Simon, by whom the poor little Prince was treated with the greatest cruelty.

again. The poor little fellow kissed us all very affectionately, and followed the guards, crying bitterly."

This blow was perhaps the hardest of all to bear for Marie-Antoinette. Her husband had been put to death, and the affliction was intensely bitter; yet he had died like a Christian hero, and she seemed to see him in heaven. But for a mother to know that the dear, sweet child, so fondly loved, so carefully tended, was given over into the hands of brutes, from whom every kind of ill-usage must be expected, and who would destroy both body and soul — here was indeed the most dreadful of all sorrows! A child, from whom so much could be expected, such an exceptionally amiable and affectionate nature, so attractive in every respect, and such a treasure to the widowed mother!

After the poor little Dauphin was taken away, they were left to mourn in peace, "which was some comfort," says Madame Royale. The municipal guards now locked them up in their rooms, but did not remain with them. No one now did the housework. Madame Elisabeth and Madame Royale made the beds, swept the rooms, and waited on the Queen. The guards came three times a day to bring food and to examine the bolts and the bars of the windows, lest anything should be disturbed.

The prisoners were able to go up by an inner staircase to the top of the tower, where the Queen spent hours looking through a crack in a wooden partition

which now divided the walk in two parts, in the hope of seeing her son go by. Madame Elisabeth was informed by the guards of the ill-usage to which the poor child was subjected, "and which was beyond imagination," says Madame Royale, "more especially because he cried at being separated from us." But Madame Elisabeth entreated the guards to keep all these particulars from the Queen, who was only too much enlightened, when she saw the child pass by, and watched his pale, sorrowful face.

The last time that such miserable comfort was granted to her, was on July 30. She had watched long, and at last she saw him, cowed and terrified, bereft of his golden curls, wearing the red revolutionary cap, and, alas! singing a song of coarse insult against herself! She knew then, how the child must have suffered, before he could have been brought to this.

On the 1st of August, one of those night visits of the guards which always brought woe to the prisoners aroused them, at two o'clock in the morning, to hear a decree by which Marie-Antoinette was to be removed to the Conciergerie prison. Her daughter and sister-in-law entreated to be allowed to follow her, but this was refused. The guards obliged her to dress in their presence, and then searched her pockets, taking possession of their contents, which consisted only of the hair of her husband and children, a multiplication table used by the Dauphin, with miniatures of Madame de Lamballe and two

other princesses. They left her only a handkerchief and a smelling-bottle.

The Queen did not utter a word till she embraced her daughter, whom she exhorted to keep up her courage, to take care of her aunt, and to be obedient to her as to another mother. She then threw herself in the arms of Madame Elisabeth, who whispered to her a few words; the Queen then quickly left the room, without daring to look back.

The gloomy prison of the Conciergerie, on the quay bordering the Seine, was one of the most dreaded among the places where the victims of the Revolution were confined. It had, however, one redeeming point: the humanity shown to the prisoners by Richard, the chief jailer, and his wife. The servant of the latter, named Rosalie Lamorlière, has left a minute account of the time spent there by the unfortunate Marie-Antoinette.

On August 1, 1793, Madame Richard called her servant Rosalie, telling her the Queen was coming, and that they must both sit up to wait for her. Meanwhile a cell, underground, like a cellar, but comparatively large, was prepared to receive her. A folding-bed made up of two mattresses on a canvas frame, with a bolster and a thin covering, was prepared for her use; but Madame Richard did her best to make it endurable, by adding delicately fine sheets, and a pillow. The furniture was completed by a table, with what was absolutely necessary for her ablutions, and two straw chairs! The

Queen of France, for whom such an abode had been prepared, arrived at three o'clock in the morning in a hackney-coach, and came into the prison with her usual majestic mien, surrounded by numerous gendarmes. She followed a dark passage, lighted by miserable lamps night and day, till she reached a low door; and as she passed through, her head, which had not been sufficiently bowed, struck against it. One of those who followed her asked if she was hurt. "Oh, no," she replied; "nothing can hurt me now."

When all formalities had been performed she was left alone with the jailer's wife and Rosalie. She looked around her with an expression of astonishment as for the first time, she saw what a prison could be; at the Temple she was provided with decent furniture and was given necessaries. But now! She was silent, however, although she looked earnestly at Madame Richard and at her servant, as if trying to guess what she could expect from them. Without speaking, she stepped on a stool, which Rosalie had brought, in the hope of adding something to her deficient comfort, and fastened her watch to a nail in the wall. She then began to undress quietly.

Rosalie, who was shy and frightened in the presence of fallen majesty, now came forward respectfully to offer her assistance. "I thank you, my good girl," said the Queen kindly; "since I have had no one to attend me, I have learned to wait upon myself."

The dawn was just beginning to appear; Madame

MARIE-ANTOINETTE AND HER CHILDREN.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., N. Y., OF A PAINTING BY MME. VIGÉE LEBRUN, IN MUSEUM OF VERSAILLES.

Richard took away the candles, and, followed by Rosalie, left the Queen alone.

The next day two gendarmes were placed in the cell, and remained there permanently, never leaving the unfortunate Queen any privacy. By the care of Madame Richard, a screen was put up before her bed and was her only protection against their incessant watchfulness. They drank, smoked, played cards, quarreled, and swore in her presence; the smoke was particularly disagreeable to her, and affected her eyes, besides causing headaches. As she had brought nothing with her from the Temple, she begged to be allowed the use of the linen and other requisites which she had left there. After some delay, a parcel was brought, containing a few articles carefully folded and put together. As she looked at each, the Queen's eyes filled with tears, and turning to Madame Richard, she said mournfully: "In the care with which all this has been chosen and prepared, I recognize the hand of my poor sister Elisabeth." After receiving this parcel of necessaries, the Queen wished to put them away but had no means of doing so in her cell. She begged Madame Richard to lend her a box of some kind, but the jailer's wife dared not procure one for her. At last, Rosalie offered a bandbox of her own, which the Queen accepted with thankfulness. Poor Rosalie also lent her a mirror of the humblest kind, which she had bought at a trifling cost for her own use—a small glass in a painted tin frame, which was received as a

boon by the royal lady, whose majestic beauty had been reflected in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles!

Two or three days after the transfer of Marie-Antoinette to the Conciergerie, Madame Richard came into the cell, followed by her youngest child, a pretty blue-eyed boy with curls of fair hair. The poor Queen ran up to him, caught him in her arms, and kissed him passionately, weeping bitterly as she did so, and saying that he reminded her of the Dauphin. She was so much affected by this incident that the kindly wife of the jailer never brought the child again to the Queen's cell.

CHAPTER XXII

Gentleness and patience of the Queen — Care of Rosalie — Enforced idleness — Her watch and diamond rings taken from her — A fatal flower — A pricked paper — Arrest of the jailer and his family — The Queen transferred to another cell — A new jailer — The Queen brought to trial — Attempt to obtain scandalous testimony from her own children — Her sentence unexpected by her — Her letter to Madame Elisabeth — Rosalie — Ministrations of a constitutional priest refused — "Errors, but not crimes."

ALL the narratives of those who came near to Marie-Antoinette in her days of misfortune are unanimous in their account of her gentleness and patience, and her quick feeling of gratitude for any kindness or attention shown to her. She never complained, says Rosalie, and cared only for cleanliness around her. She was particular in this respect; but as Rosalie tried to satisfy her, she received the pewter spoons and forks with a grateful smile, because they were always bright and clean. Her dinner was nicely served, with clean table-linen, and was carefully cooked by Rosalie. She had daily the soup,— so inevitable at a French table,— a dish of meat (alternately poultry and a joint), vegetables, which she seemed to like better than meat, and fruit. As usual, she drank only water, but the kind jailers

managed to procure the Ville d'Avray water to which she was accustomed. Rosalie admired the neat adroitness with which she carved her food, and still more her beautiful hands, so white and so delicately formed. She wore at first diamond rings, and in the long hours of enforced idleness which were so painful to her she sat in deep thought, playing unconsciously with these rings, which were taken from her by the commissaries who frequently visited the prison, and who probably appropriated them to their own use; for they are not mentioned in any list of confiscated articles. They also took her watch, which was particularly dear to her; for she had brought it from Vienna when, as a girl of fourteen, she had come to France to meet such an unexpected fate. She made no complaint, but shed tears when these last treasures were taken from her.

The privation of occupation was particularly painful to one whose time had been principally employed in needlework since her misfortunes had obliged her to live in retirement. Even knitting-needles were refused!

The women employed in the prison were obliged to mend her clothes incessantly, for they became injured, and in a manner rotted, by the excessive damp of her cell, which was far below the level of the neighboring Seine. Her black prunella shoes were covered with mold, although Rosalie cleaned them regularly! The Queen wore alternately her black widow's garb and a white morning dress. She

was so weary of inaction that she pulled threads from the canvas on which the paper covering the walls of her cell was pasted, and plaited these threads into a sort of flat braid, with the help of pins fastened to her knee! Sometimes, when the guards were playing at cards, she stood by and watched them. Marie-Antoinette daily read a devotional book that was in her possession, and was engaged in prayer for a considerable portion of the day. She sought relaxation by reading the travels of Captain Cook, lent to her by the jailer, in which she was interested, saying that she liked to read "dreadful adventures." Poor Queen! Could any be worse than her own! No candle was given her when night came, and Rosalie tried to do what was necessary to prepare for the night in as dilatory a manner as she could, that the Queen might share the light which she brought with her for as long a time as was possible. She went to bed by the dim light of a lamp in the courtyard, on which the high window of her cell opened and allowed a glimmer to reach her.

But painful as was her condition, it was about to become worse still, in consequence, alas! of the royalist attempts to save her, which had no result save exasperating her enemies and increasing her sufferings. The Chevalier de Rougeville,[1] a devoted royalist, succeeded in gaining admission to the

[1] Called the "Chevalier de Maison Rouge" in the well-known novel of Dumas.

Queen's cell in disguise with a plan of flight. Unhappily, she was not prepared to see him, and started in a manner which did not escape the observation of those around her. As he stood near her, he dropped a carnation on the floor at her feet. This she took up when she thought that she had found a suitable opportunity; it contained a bit of thin paper with a few words of apparently little importance, but ending more significantly: "I will come on Friday." She tried to prick with a pin a sort of answer to this communication; but the guards, who had watched her, took the paper,[1] and reported the whole incident. The jailer and his wife, with their daughter, were immediately arrested and sent to the Madelonnettes prison; another jailer was appointed, whose wife, happily for Marie-Antoinette, retained the servant Rosalie as an assistant. The Queen was then (September 11), transferred to another cell where she remained till the day of her execution (October 16). The new jailer, a man named Bault, although harsh and rough in manner and strict in supervision, was not really unkind; but he was extremely afraid of what might be the consequence of any indulgence shown to the prisoner, although disposed to do what he could to alleviate her sufferings without injuring himself. The cell allotted to the Queen had still more the characteristics of a dungeon than her first prison. The walls were extremely thick, but so damp that the wet drops

[1] The pricked paper still exists among the State Papers.

trickled down upon her bed. Bault nailed up a piece of carpet as a protection, saying gruffly to those who objected that he wished to prevent the prisoner from hearing what took place outside. At the same time he declared that, being responsible for the person of his prisoner, no one should go into her cell[1] without his leave. The two guards were thus obliged to remain in the adjoining cell, Bault retaining the key of the intervening door. This delivered the Queen from the continual presence of the guards, but limited the attentions shown to her by Rosalie, who could not come in without the jailer.

Before the fatal conspiracy of the carnation the Queen had seemed hopeful of being soon claimed by her family in Austria, and Rosalie was told that she should go with her, the Queen wishing to retain her services. But since her transfer to the new cell she seemed anxious, and repeatedly paced to and fro, apparently deep in thought. In fact, the fate that awaited her, but which even now she did not fully anticipate, was only hastened by the unfortunate and useless attempts to effect her deliverance.

On October 3, 1793, the Convention issued a decree ordering judgment to be passed on the "Widow Capet." Then began the odious attempt to gather testimony against her from her own children! On

[1] The Queen's cell is still to be seen at the Conciergerie. It is narrow, with thick walls and a small window, the top of which is on a level with the courtyard. The floor is paved with bricks, put up edgewise.

the 6th of October, two commissaries, Pache and Chaumette, came to examine the unfortunate Dauphin. The child had been beaten and ill-used "beyond what could be imagined," as his sister, Madame Royale, testifies; he was also perpetually threatened with the guillotine, which frightened him to such a degree that he fainted several times through excess of terror. Added to all this, he was forced to drink raw spirits, which threw him into a stupefied state! Cowed with terror, and too young to understand the meaning of the questions addressed to him concerning his mother, he answered as he saw that he was required to do. It must not be forgotten that the unhappy child was only eight years old, and that he had already witnessed scenes of horror which had only too much enlightened him as to what he might expect.

On the 7th of October the commissaries, with several guards, went up to the rooms occupied by Madame Elisabeth and her niece, whom they ordered to follow them. For the first time Madame Elisabeth was pale and trembling; but she was not allowed to accompany the young girl, who went away with their persecutors. In her simple narrative Madame Royale says: "It was the first time that I had ever been alone with men. I did not know what they intended to do with me, but I prayed inwardly to God for protection."

When she saw her brother, who was to be examined again in her presence, she ran to embrace him, but

he was taken from her, and she was examined alone in the first instance. "Chaumette then questioned me on many wicked things of which they accused my mother and my aunt. I was thunderstruck at such horrors, and although I was so frightened, I could not help saying that these suppositions were infamous. Notwithstanding my tears, they persistently questioned me for a long time. There were things that I did not understand, but what I could understand was so dreadful that I cried through indignation." The Dauphin was then recalled, and the brother and sister were examined face to face; but the poor child was naturally more helpless than even the young and innocent Madame Royale. The ordeal lasted three hours before the young Princess was taken back to her aunt, who was then summoned in her turn. Madame Elisabeth answered with contemptuous energy and spirit, and was detained only an hour instead of three. "The deputies saw that they could not frighten her as they hoped to do in my case, but the life that I had led for the last four years, and the example of my parents, had given me strength of mind."

Five days later the Queen was summoned in her turn for examination previous to her trial. She gave her name as "Marie-Antoinette of Lorraine and Austria, aged about thirty-eight years, widow of the King of France."

She answered clearly and adroitly all the questions put to her, and was then informed that Tronson

Ducoudray, a barrister of reputation, and Chauveau-Lagarde, had been officially appointed as counsel for the defense. But Chauveau-Lagarde, who at once went to consult with the Queen, found that the trial was to commence the next day (October 15) and vainly asked for a delay of three days (certainly not too much!) to prepare his defense and examine the indictment. The refusal of the government proved only too clearly that no justice could be expected, and that the Queen's fate was sealed beforehand.

On the following day (October 15) the proceedings began before the Revolutionary Court or Tribunal, which then held its sittings in the large hall[1] of the prison. The Queen was summoned at eight o'clock in the morning, and, according to the testimony of Rosalie, without having taken any nourishment. She wore her widow's dress and cap, over which was fastened a black crape scarf. Her hair was simply but neatly arranged, rather high on her forehead; it was white on the temples, but not perceptibly gray elsewhere. She looked pale and thin, but the majestic lines of her queen-like face remained, and she retained the grace and dignity of carriage which had always been so remarkable. She walked firmly to her seat — an arm-chair which, with unusual courtesy, had been provided for her use. She looked steadily at her judges, and as the indictment with its multiplied insults was read, as she

[1] Now destroyed.

heard herself compared to Frédégonde, Messalina, and all the similar monsters known to history, she drew up her still proud head, and played indifferently on the arm of the chair with her fingers, "as if on a pianoforte," says one of the spectators. When questioned, she answered clearly and steadily, often showing considerable acuteness in her replies to treacherous questions, where the least inadvertence might have caused serious consequences. To one accusation — that concerning the Dauphin's revelations — she made no reply. This was brought forward as a sort of admission of guilt. She then spoke, exclaiming in vibrating tones which went home to all around her: "I did not answer, because nature itself recoils from such an accusation addressed to a mother! I appeal to all those who may be here!"

There were murmurs in the crowd — a momentary reaction in her favor, which alarmed those who had sworn that she should die. Witnesses were summoned, and the Queen was cross-examined on their testimony, often of the most absurd kind.

At four o'clock an interval of rest was granted, and the Queen, who was utterly exhausted, was allowed to leave her seat. An officer who saw that she was nearly fainting gave her a glass of water and assisted her to leave the court; it will scarcely be believed that this act of common humanity caused his arrest! The jailer Bault then desired Rosalie to take some soup to the Queen; but the poor girl was

not allowed to give it herself, the bowl being taken from her, to her great distress, merely to satisfy the curiosity of an abandoned woman who wished for an opportunity of seeing the Queen to her satisfaction!

At five o'clock P. M. the proceedings were resumed, and lasted till four o'clock on the following morning (the 16th of October), when the sentence was given out by which "Marie-Antoinette of Austria, widow of Louis Capet," was condemned to the penalty of death, which penalty was to be carried out within twenty-four hours. Chauveau-Lagarde here states that the Queen had not even then believed in the possibility of such a sentence; that the worst she anticipated was the separation from her children which would be the consequence of perpetual banishment from France.

Both of the Queen's advocates were put under arrest before she left the court, and were consequently unable to hear from herself what she felt; but they saw that she had received an unexpected shock, and for a moment seemed thunderstruck. She, however, quickly recovered her presence of mind and her fortitude. As she reached the railing which separated her from the spectators assembled in the court, she raised her head, and walked out with a firm step.

When she reached her cell she asked immediately for writing materials, without taking rest, although the night was nearly spent, and her trial had lasted

for twenty hours, with no food but the bowl of soup taken on the preceding evening. The energy of mind which could command such physical exhaustion is truly wonderful.

She sat down, and by the feeble light of two tallow candles wrote to Madame Elisabeth a letter dated the 16th of October, half-past four o'clock in the morning. This letter, which was not given to Madame Elisabeth, has no signature; but it is nevertheless considered authentic, and is countersigned by several well-known revolutionists. It is preserved among the State Papers. The Queen writes most affectionately to Madame Elisabeth, thanking her for the sacrifices she has made for all; while assuring her of her own calmness in the presence of approaching death, she sends messages to her children, and, like the King, forbids them ever to seek revenge for her death.

She then alludes to the circumstance "which has been so painful to her heart"—the grief which her son must have caused Madame Elisabeth. She entreats her to remember his age, and to forgive him, reminding her how easy it is to make a child say what is suggested to him, and especially what he does not understand. The Queen then makes her profession of faith as a firm Catholic, expresses hope in the mercy of God, and bids an affectionate farewell to all; adding that if one of the schismatic priests who had taken the constitutional oath should be brought to her, she would refuse his ministry.

The Queen intrusted the letter to the jailer Bault, but he dared not attempt to send it to Madame Elisabeth, and gave it into the hands of Fouquier-Tinville, the public prosecutor, where it remained.

The Queen, after this last effort, lay down on her bed, where Rosalie found her when the jailer sent to offer her nourishment. The two candles had burned low in the cell, and by their dim light Rosalie saw an officer half asleep in a chair, and the Queen, in her long black dress, lying on the bed weeping bitterly.

Rosalie, in deep distress herself, asked in a low voice if she would take anything.

The Queen, still weeping, replied: "Oh, my good girl, all is over for me now!"

"Madame," then said Rosalie, in tones of entreaty, "I have some good soup ready. You have taken nothing to-day, and you had next to nothing yesterday. You require support; pray let me bring you some soup."

"No, no; I thank you, but I want nothing."

The girl turned away; the Queen, seeing that she was in tears, feared to have grieved her, and with the characteristic kindness which she retained to the last, called her back. "Well, well, Rosalie, you may bring me your soup."

Rosalie hastened to fetch it, and the Queen sat up on her bed to try to take it, but could not swallow more than two or three spoonfuls. She then desired Rosalie to return about the break of day to help her to dress.

Meanwhile a "constitutional priest,"[1] as they were called, came to offer the Queen his spiritual aid, which she refused. He asked if he should accompany her to the place of execution. She replied with indifference: "As you please." He then said: "Your death will expiate —" "Yes, monsieur," she quickly rejoined, "*errors*, but not *crimes*."

[1] A priest who had taken the forbidden oath, and was consequently under interdict from the Church.

CHAPTER XXIII

The last insults — Dress of the Queen when going to the scaffold — The sentence read to her — The executioner ties her hands and cuts off her hair — The cart — The last progress through the streets — An American witness — The Tuileries — Scene on the scaffold — The last look of Marie-Antoinette.

AT the appointed hour Rosalie came to assist her in changing her clothes; for she wished to appear before the people in as proper attire as was within her power. Rosalie had brought a change of linen, for which the Queen had asked, and unfolded it in readiness as the Queen stooped down behind her bed, desiring Rosalie to stand before her as she unfastened her gown to draw it down. Immediately the officer on guard came up to the bed, and leaning his elbow on the pillow, looked over to have a better view, staring insolently at the Queen, who blushed deeply, and hastily drew her large muslin kerchief over her shoulders, as, clasping her hands, she said imploringly: "I entreat you, monsieur, in the name of decency, to allow me to change my linen without a witness." "I cannot allow it," said the man roughly; "my orders are to keep eyes upon you constantly, day and night." The Queen sighed deeply, and then quietly knelt down behind Rosalie,

MARIE-ANTOINETTE.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BRAUN, CLÉMENT & CO., N. Y., OF THE PAINTING BY MME. VIGÉE LEBRUN, IN MUSEUM OF VERSAILLES.

who screened her as best she could, while the unfortunate prisoner, with every care and precaution, changed her clothes. She had received orders not to wear her widow's mourning, "lest the people should insult her in consequence"; but, rather, lest she should awaken too much commiseration, as every one in the prison concluded. The Queen made no remark, and put on the white dress which she always wore in the morning over a black skirt. She wore a plain lawn cap, without the widow's scarf of crape, and fastened black ribbons to her wrists, after having crossed her large white muslin kerchief over her dress. She was now ready for whatever might be ordered, and knelt down in prayer. Rosalie was not allowed to remain, and retired, sobbing as if her heart would break.

At ten o'clock the judges came into the cell, where another officer had relieved guard. The Queen rose from her knees to receive the officials, who told her that they came to read to her the sentence. "This is quite useless," said the Queen, in a raised voice; "I know the sentence only too well." "That does not matter," answered one of those present; "you must hear it again." The Queen made no reply, and the sentence was read to her. As this ended the chief executioner — Henri Sanson, a young man of gigantic height — came in carrying a rope. He went up to the Queen, saying: "Hold out your hands."

She drew back, seeming greatly agitated. "Are

you going to tie my hands? They were not tied in the case of Louis XVI till he reached the scaffold."

The judges said to the executioner: "Do your duty."

"Oh, mon Dieu!" cried the Queen.

The executioner then seized the beautiful, delicate hands and tied them with a rope[1] behind her back. The Queen sighed deeply and looked up to heaven; but although tears were ready to flow, she restrained them. When her hands were thus firmly bound, the executioner took off her cap and cut off her hair. As she felt the touch of the scissors on her neck she started and turned hastily, evidently supposing that she was about to be murdered in the cell; she then saw the executioner folding up her hair, which he put in his pocket.[2] Before she left the cell she said anxiously to the officer now on guard: "Do you think that they will let me reach the place of execution without tearing me to pieces?"

He assured her that she had nothing to fear from the mob, but she seemed anxious as she followed the officials who led her to her doom, scarcely hoping even for the dreadful security of a guarded scaffold! When she saw the cart awaiting her she again started, and seemed to receive a fresh shock; she had supposed that, like the King, she would have the protection of a closed coach. The cart was of a kind seen only in remote country parts at the present day, and

[1] "Too tightly," says an eye-witness.

[2] It was burned, after the execution, in the entrance-hall of the prison.

made of four separate sides rudely tied together, the back part being let down for ingress, with a step-ladder attached. A plank put across the cart served as a seat. The Queen ascended the steps firmly, and prepared to sit facing the horse; but she was immediately told that she must sit backward, looking toward the spectators. She turned and took her seat with perfect calmness and a grave, resolute look, gazing straight before her, pale, with red, even bloodshot eyes, but carrying her head high, as was her wont. The executioner and his assistant stood behind her, leaning against the sides of the cart. The priest took his place next to her, but she turned away and seemed determined not to speak to him, though he held up a crucifix before her from time to time. She seemed to suffer pain from the ropes round her hands, on which he pressed to relieve the tension; the ends were held by the executioner, pulling the arms backward. The cart went on slowly, while an immense crowd[1] followed in dead silence till they reached the Rue St. Honoré. There they found hostile elements, especially the abandoned women who in Paris always play such a prominent part in all popular disturbances. Here there was such a burst of insult and execration that the unfortunate Queen might well dread the possibility of falling into such hands.

But the cart turned into the Rue Royale, and reached the Place de la Révolution, where the scaffold

[1] A young American, Daniel Strobel of Charleston, grandfather to the writer of these pages, was in the crowd before the Conciergerie prison when the Queen came out, and followed closely to the last.

was erected. As the Queen passed before the Tuileries she turned with an earnest, lingering look.

The scaffold was erected facing the garden of the Tuileries, before a statue of Liberty, on the spot where the Obelisk now stands, and not where the King's scaffold had stood, which was on the opposite side, but more to the left of the Place, facing the Champs-Elysées. The priest attempted to assist her in alighting, but notwithstanding the increased difficulty consequent on her tied hands, she turned from him and stepped down firmly, with apparent ease, as quickly as she could, seeming desirous to hasten the end as far as possible. The executioner offered her his aid in ascending the scaffold, but she went up alone and quickly, immediately going to the plank on which she was to be bound. In doing so she trod on the foot of the executioner, who made a motion as of pain. With the kind courtesy which characterized her even in this last hour, she quickly uttered: "Pardon, monsieur!" in a tone of regret and apology. The executioner and his assistant then fastened her to the plank and tore off her muslin kerchief, lest it should impede the action of the knife. The last motion of Marie-Antoinette was an involuntary attempt to bring forward her tied hands as a screen for her uncovered shoulders.

The executioner held up the head to the populace.[1] To the deep awe of the spectators, the face

[1] Daniel Strobel always expressed his conviction that, for a short space of time at least, she was perfectly conscious, as if still alive.

of Marie-Antoinette expressed perfect consciousness, and the eyes looked on the crowd! The expression was that of intense astonishment, as of some wonderful vision revealed.

All was over; the eventful life was ended. The follies of early youth, the joys of the past, the dreadful sorrows of the present time, the heroic final atonement for what had been "errors, but not crimes"—all was over. All had vanished like a dream, save the eternal reward in store for the faith and trust of the Christian — more valuable now than the majesty of the Queen.

Requiescat in pace!

CHAPTER XXIV

Sequel — The trial of Madame Elisabeth — Her fortitude at the scaffold — The cruelty practised on the Dauphin — His horrible isolation — The pity that was shown too late — His last words of his mother — Strength of character shown by the surviving princess, Madame Royale — Sent to Austria in 1795 — Married to her cousin.

AFTER the removal of the Queen to the Conciergerie, the young Madame Royale remained with her devoted aunt, Madame Elisabeth, who, foreseeing that they would not long be left together, strove in every way to prepare the young girl for the life in store for her. She taught her to require no attendance, and regulated her occupations, settling fixed hours for household work, prayer, reading, needlework, and study. The princesses were now entirely neglected; their food was of the coarsest sort, and they had no assistance of any kind. In vain they entreated for information as to the fate of the Queen. They were kept in complete ignorance of what had befallen her.

On May 9, 1794, Madame Elisabeth was taken from the Temple prison to the Conciergerie, where, after a short examination, she was sentenced to death. The Princess anxiously inquired for the

Queen, but received only evasive replies, until the next morning, when, on being led to the fatal cart, she met a group of twenty-three prisoners about to share her fate. All belonged to the highest aristocracy, and were consequently well known to Madame Elisabeth. The greater number were ladies. One of these informed the Princess of the fate of the Queen. All went together in the same cart; but Madame Elisabeth was the last on the list, and was consequently required to witness twenty-three executions before her own death! To the last she remained calm and resolute, encouraging those around her. As the names were called, each prisoner rose and bowed low to Madame Elisabeth, who embraced all the ladies as, in turn, they passed before her.

When this scene of horror had been repeated twenty-three times, "Elisabeth Capet" was called, and with a firm step the daughter of kings walked to the fatal plank, which reeked with the blood of faithful subjects.

The knife fell; the pure and noble life was ended. Once more the royal blood of France flowed on a scaffold!

THE DAUPHIN

The fate of the poor child who was the nominal heir to the crown of France was the worst among all the victims who suffered during that frightful social convulsion. No slave, no child of fiction or reality,

ever had a more pathetic history, or one more harrowing in its details.

The cobbler Simon treated the Dauphin with more cruelty than would be accepted as possible in the case of any tyrant of fiction. Blows, kicks, missiles hurled at his head, insults of all kinds, oaths, were as the daily bread of the poor child so tenderly nurtured in the palace of his fathers! "Capet" was the usual appellation adopted; but others more abusive, such as "Louveteau,"[1] were commonly showered upon him. Simon was frequently intoxicated, and when in this state the ill-usage of the child was still more horrible; so that he would probably have lost his life through the insane violence of this tyrant, if the woman Simon had not protected her charge in some degree.

The poor little fellow, partly in gratitude for her interference, partly in the hope of propitiation, showed her every attention in his power, with the graceful courtesy which had been so carefully taught to him by his royal mother. The woman Simon herself bore witness to this, saying that he was "a most amiable child" who tried his best to please her. "He would run," she says, "*to clean and black my shoes*, and every morning he brought my foot-warmer to my bedside before I got up!"

Simon made him do the work of a servant, or rather of a slave; the smallest mistake, the slightest defect in the performance of what was required

[1] Wolf-pup.

of him, was visited on the child by barbarous ill-usage.

And yet he was to be reduced to a still worse condition. After some time Simon and his wife were removed from the prison. The child of eight years was then shut up alone in a cell with a grated, padlocked window which could not be opened to renew the air!

He remained there for fifteen months in solitary confinement, his food being pushed through a wicket with a pitcher of water. No one entered the cell, which was never aired or cleaned, and from which nothing was removed. His linen and sheets were never changed during the whole of this time, nor was his person cared for in any manner! Soon the cell was overrun with rats and mice, while he became a prey to the most loathsome insects, and in consequence was covered with sores. The poor child fell into a state of torpor, and lay on his pallet without moving, till he was called to the wicket by the jailers, who threw him his wretched food as to a dog, with abusive words and oaths. He was also roughly called up at night, to show himself at the wicket; but no one ever went into the den.

During the reaction which followed the fall of Robespierre, the new government sent commissaries who had the feelings of decent humanity, and who entered the cell of "le petit Capet," where the atmosphere was unbearable. When they saw the condition of the wretched child, their feelings of

indignation, and even horror, were forcibly expressed. The child was questioned, but he would not answer. One idea seemed alone to survive in his dormant intellect — that he had been induced to say something which had injured his mother. This he probably had gathered from the language of Simon, and thenceforward he would not speak; blows could not conquer his resolution.

The commissaries drew up a report of the condition in which they had found the little prisoner, and he was promptly given into the hands of kind keepers, by whom he was removed to a large, airy, and cheerful room, with a good bed and clean linen; he was carefully tended, and was given new clothes. A physician was summoned, but all was too late. The bright and amiable little Dauphin was now deformed, and almost, if not entirely, an idiot! Under the influence of kind treatment his intellect seemed in some measure to revive; but all was limited to the one thought — his mother. The jailer took him to the top of the tower, where she had watched so anxiously to see him go by. The poor child, who still refused to speak, bent down and silently gathered a few wild flowers — mere weeds which grew between the stones! He made them into a little posy, which he dropped before the door of the room that had been hers!

On another occasion he watched the kind face of his jailer, and then, looking back anxiously, crept to the door. The jailer drew him away gently.

"Oh!" he cried, "let me see her! Once — only once!"

"My poor child, it cannot be!" said the jailer, much moved.

The child threw himself on his bed, and turned to the wall; from that day his physical condition became rapidly worse. Occasionally he murmured: "Mama is in the other tower! I am all alone!"

Soon it was evident that the end was at hand. On the last day of his life the child said suddenly to his keeper:

"Do you hear the beautiful music?"

"What music, Monsieur?"[1]

"Such beautiful music! Mama is singing! Oh, I hope that my sister hears the music! She will be so pleased!"

The jailer raised the child in his arms, and soon he had found his mother.

He was then ten years old. He died on the 8th of June, 1795.

MADAME ROYALE

From the 1st of August, 1793, when the Queen was taken to the Conciergerie, till the 9th of May, 1794, Madame Elisabeth, as I have before said, continued her mission of "guardian angel" to the young Princess, whose wonderful fortitude and unvarying prudence of conduct when she remained alone suf-

[1] He was called "Monsieur" at this improved period.

ficiently proved to all the world how carefully she had been prepared for any event.

On the fatal 9th of May her last friend and support was taken from her, and the girl of fifteen was left alone, surrounded by brutal men, without a woman near her, without aid or assistance of any kind.

She scrupulously followed the advice and example of the admirable Elisabeth, and regulated her time according to her instructions, keeping her room carefully clean and neat by her own exertions, throwing water on the floor to refresh the air, and punctually walking up and down the room for an hour daily, at a quick pace, in order to supplement deficient exercise.

She mended her clothes, and even washed them when necessary cleanliness was deficient. As she says, with uncomplaining simplicity, she was given soap and water, and could keep everything clean!

Madame Royale was thus retained in solitary confinement for fifteen months — a penalty which strong men find unendurable! But she possessed the peace of a pure conscience, and of the holy meditations taught to her by her saintly guide. The only human beings with whom she was now in contact were the jailers and the municipal guards. She always received them in grave silence, and when questioned answered in as few words as possible, never yielding to any attempt at conversation.

Madame Elisabeth had earnestly exhorted her young niece to manage so as never to be in bed when the visits of inspection were paid; and although these visits were of daily occurrence, and took place at all hours of the night, the guards always found her dressed and seated by the side of her bed. She retired to rest only when the visit was over.

And thus she remained, alone, without advice, sympathy, or comfort. After the death of her unfortunate brother, more humane inspectors interfered to improve her position. She was given proper clothing; for notwithstanding her care, her clothes could no longer be mended. But the most valuable of the favors now granted to her was the society of a lady named Madame de Chantereine, who was appointed to fill the post of governess-companion to the unfortunate royal prisoner, and who seems to have accomplished her task in a satisfactory manner, for the young Princess became much attached to her.

Madame de Tourzel also obtained admittance to the prison, and visited Madame Royale, with the dear Pauline of her childhood; the joy of meeting these friends, after the terrible isolation of her life, may be imagined.

In December, 1795, the daughter of Marie-Antoinette was sent to her mother's country, in consequence of a treaty with Austria. She hastened to join her uncle, the Comte de Provence, now en-

titled Louis XVIII, and was soon married to the Duc d'Angoulême, son of the Comte d'Artois, afterward Charles X. The Princess returned to France at the restoration of the Bourbons; but was again obliged to leave the country by the revolution of 1830.

She died at Frohsdorf on October 19, 1851.

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